

THE GREEN GOD'S PAVILION

MABEL WOOD MARTIN

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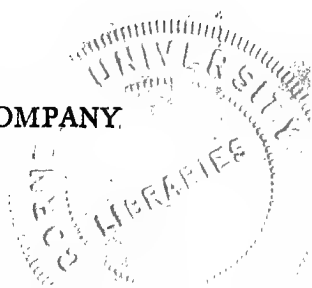
THE GREEN GOD'S PAVILION

*A NOVEL OF
THE PHILIPPINES*

BY
MABEL WOOD MARTIN



NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

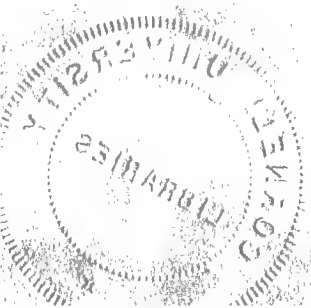


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TO
MY HUSBAND

THE GREEN GOD'S PAVILION

CHAPTER I

TREMBLING in a fervor of joy the girl confronted it. Everybody in the excitement of arrival was trying to crowd her away from the packed railing of the vessel, but she managed to get her glimpse of that magic reality — one of those golden far Eastern cities that she had dreamed of all her life on the other side of the world. Its glittering towers and domes, bursting out of the garden of the equator, pointed to a sky clear enough to be heaven itself. Here long ago East and West had first gloriously mingled; once this city of golden galleons had commanded all the cities of the Pacific. To so many a conquistador it had been the end of the rainbow! To the girl gazing out on its fiercely sunlit walls it held the secret of the future.

In the launches skurrying up alongside the vessel, Julie saw the eager, expectant faces straining for a glimpse of friends or kin. As she looked down, this new universe seemed suddenly to sit on her head like a red-hot ball. She felt a moment's stifling sense of its weight. This was the world to which she had come, seeking a place. Those towers and domes, piercing glittering space like swords and scimitars, appeared suddenly to intimate that some special passport was needed to enter this world. And she had not lived long enough in the universe to feel at home anywhere.

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she might be. Her detached existence under her uncle's roof, always out of touching distance with the family, had engendered that feeling of isolation. She had been a superfluous personality, outside the magic circle, and had kept to the farthest retreat of that unfriendly house of life — a vivid little hermit groping around the walls of her own chamber for the fourth dimension. Hopelessly rigid that old universe had been — and immutable — till one day it had astonishingly crumbled, as if by some special decree.

Julie was here on this vessel, looking out in trepidation on a remote and inconjecturable land, because her uncle's affairs, always quite prosperous, had broken on the rocks of investments. Out of the wreck she had emerged into a dizzy independence. It had devolved upon her to take charge of herself somehow — the verdict of her life! The walls had burst forever. To own one's self! To claim unhindered a whole patch of the universe! Beyond there, in that city of pearl-circled walls, a trans-section of existence was hers.

Crowds were now streaming all over the decks. The greetings of long separations everywhere. Julie saw joyous laughter and frank tears. Some of the men had come in from the wilderness where peril and disease were daily fortune, and their white faces and emaciated forms startled their womenfolk; others were strong and brown, and conquest and construction hung upon their brows like a kind of fever. Julie looked carefully at them all as at an index page of what lay before her. After having begun to feel that she had come to the end of the earth, she took courage. It was brought forcibly to her that America had come into the East to do something actual — that she had

raised her standards of democracy among ancient kingdoms, and would stir them to their foundations.

As far back as she could remember Julie had felt the lure of Great Adventures. In ardent lyric imaginings she had, from childhood up, seen herself following always the rapture of unbeaten tracks. The Golden Gate, with its shimmering allure opening upon the promise of strange lands, had always been the biggest emotion in her life. The wind that blew up from it had been a messenger summoning her across that sparkling water to the freedom that lay beyond those ports of dreams.

Staring at the simplicity and the strength of these people of the New World, she wondered if her slim credentials would hold among them. She was not really what they wanted here—a trained artisan. Somehow she had managed to slip by in the stress of the moment. It was her own desperate determination to balk all efforts to keep her under dominance at home that had brought her to this goal. It had developed that she was fitted for nothing in an organized society. Her music, her languages, her sense of existence were all too fragmentary to negotiate.

But it had transpired that there was another world where matters of existence were not so stringent—and since few had seemed inclined to hazard them, Jepton's Teachers' Agency had let her pass on the certificate of Miss Blossom's School, which had been good for nothing else. In a breathless transport, she had signed herself to service in our colonial possessions across the seas. There was a salary, of course—ten per cent. of which for the first year went to Jepton's; a rather inadequate stipend, it had been prophesied, for colonial existence. But to the reality

of this Julie had given no thought. She was a woman at last — with an original face and a surprising faculty for seeing splendor in everything. Just the kind of person whose naïve encounter with the world makes history.

Two people who looked very nice indeed were standing off regarding Julie with fixed earnestness; a stout and agreeable man with a thin, transparently amber little lady. Could it be possible that there were friends for her also on these strange shores? The lady presented herself as Mrs. Calixter, and her husband as an old friend of Mr. Dreschell's.

Julie recollected that when her uncle had been forced to recognize the power of fate he had written to a friend in Manila who was Collector of the Port, and asked the good offices of himself and his wife for Julie. Mr. Calixter told her that he and her uncle had been college friends — a long time ago; but that, in these pioneer days, she was given to understand, was a tremendous bond. They informed Julie hospitably that she should remain with them till she discovered what was to become of her.

No one over here, Mrs. Calixter explained, had a definite idea of the next moment. One's fortune lay in flux. Nothing had yet completely taken shape. The great project unraveled daily out of destiny and a few men's minds. Fighting was still going on in some of the islands. The khaki-clad men coming aboard were from those distant, disordered places, and one could see on their gaunt faces the shadow of menace and loneliness. The men in plain white clothes had their struggle too in the making of a civilization overnight.

An impression of precariousness and uncertainty

was conveyed to Julie, as if she were about to set foot upon a forming planet amid widespread restlessness of soul. If she had dreamed of the improbable, it seemed reasonable that it would transpire here. In such a place, amid such conditions, ordinary ordered emotions dropped out of sight. The living of men here was creative, and at high pressure.

The invitation of the Calixters was a godsend to Julie. She had been completely vague as to what to do with herself. For the moment, anyway, she was fixed among these mutabilities.

Launches carried them up the river, past the fort that once held single-handed the white man's empire of the Pacific. The stream, meandering to the sea with provoking deliberateness, carried on its back a strange host, a fantastic floating humanity ceaselessly and inconjecturably drifting in craft that looked like dolphins borne from the sea of legends; upstanding boatmen in peaked hats prodding tiny canopied boats like ivory toys against the stream, amid the gayeties of the city; trading vessels south-bound for pearls or spices perhaps, with swart crews, and Eurasian captains on the bridges.

They landed amid another motley of strange vehicles and stranger races. The buildings along the wharf were blackened by smoke-stacks from the Seven Seas. A sun-blistered race of beings, leaning nonchalantly against pillars and posts, watched, with the deep tolerance of the East, the influx from the West. This calm, which was almost awful, gave Julie an uncanny sensation of human futility.

"One of our fine little mornings on the equator," Mr. Calixter declared, remarking her wilted expression. "You'll get used to them."

As she followed the Calixters to their carriage, a dark-skinned female in scant attire, smoking a cigar as long as a man's arm, crossed her path. Julie gasped. So many unclothed creatures going unabashed about their business staggered her. Eons of consecratedly covered ancestors suffered violence before this exposure. Mr. Calixter, however, was of the opinion, as he lifted his plump, perspiring person after her into the carriage, that for apparel in this climate the human hide was incomparable. But they should all be colored like Easter eggs, to tell them apart; he could seldom distinguish one nude brown person from another. It was just possible that we were dependent to a certain extent on our clothes for individuality.

They drove up into the city through ancient streets blazoned with sun-lit, vivid houses, quickened with picturesque and unfamiliar activities, and flowing with a humanity that lived its whole life open to the universe.

Ceaselessly, strangely, contrastingly, this amazing humanity throbbed along the thoroughfares like creatures out of Arabian Nights' Tales: carters with their carabaos — monstrous beasts of fearful calm, drawing primitive stone wheels through the dust of ages; turbaned East Indians with bushy beards, offering ivories and tapestries to the fantastic houses; brown women in pineapple fabrics, balancing on their heads baskets of Ylang-Ylang for the manufacture of perfume; a dwarf negrito, enslaved from the forests of the north; water-carriers; Chinese rice-peddlers; children playing with absurd, short-tailed cats; babies taking in life at the curbstone from their mothers' breasts. Down these streets in poverty, disease, and cheerful blindness of soul, marched all the races of the East.

Julie gasped at what she saw. The riddle of the universe seemed to be unfolding before her wondering gaze.

She turned from that strange stream of people with their enigma, their insoluble mystery, to the houses: such startling houses, intoxicatedly painted like the sunsets over in the sea, and decorated with all manner of things — orchids pure as souls; crimson-crested parrots screaming for the jungle; rain-bow glass; and little dragons' wings.

These were the state chambers of this existence: their chromatic splendor was reserved for the ceremonies of birth, marriage, and death; but it was down in the streets that these children of the sun lived their lives.

There were flashes of queer open shops, cabinets of the curiosities of the world; showers of wooden shoes suspended from the ceilings; pink satin coffins; Chinese ginger jars painted with peacocks; brass church-bells; unleavened bread, universal red pillows, ornamental brooms that looked like Cleopatra's palm sunshade. Julie passed them in ecstasy.

Farther on, she had a vision of old walls and moats, and little stone gates with ancient coats-of-arms above them, and a surprisingly great number of old stone churches. They were passing now, Mr. Calixter told her, through the ancient walled city that Legaspi had built. She saw the priests in their white robes, pacing their high airy galleries, saying their prayers in the sunlight, above the world. She drew in with a deep breath the fragrance of the sacred tree of India that flowered in the monastic gardens.

Pensively, poetically, the conquistador atmosphere still hung over the heart of the city. Priests and

armored captains floated before Julie's mind. In all the pagan *hinterland* of the East, this was the single Christian citadel, attacked throughout the ages by land and sea by all the savage hordes of darkness.

She stared at the tinted oriental domes rearing above this ancient Christian city, and felt mingling with its priestly atmosphere the Eleusinian mystery of the East, as if hidden in this city there were still unconsecrated shrines.

They passed out of the Walled City with its dark buttresses, its dungeons, its mediævally barred doors, its intimations of eternal age and impenetrable mystery, to the Calixters' home on the sea.

A rainbow scarf of tropical vegetation trailed over this part of Manila, and Julie caught glimpses of gardens full of the perfume of dreams, gardens for whose incredible blossoming all the light in the sun must have been needed.

At luncheon, she cast her first attentive look at her host and hostess. Beside the splendor of this new planet unrolling before her, two individuals had not been compelling in interest.

Mrs. Calixter, it appeared, was a lady from whose being every particle of flesh had been amazingly subtracted, save just enough to leave her alive. She had stayed over here to keep Mr. Calixter company, and in the process had parted ways with her youth. She was very kind, but very, very tired. This fatigue, she told Julie, had gone down deep, and would never rest out.

Her husband was plump, and would go good-natured to his grave. Against such a temperament all climates are powerless. The tropics had achieved only the rape of his hair. He was so astonishingly bald that when

he removed his hat the effect was one of almost indecent exposure. The hair that refused to remain on his cranium displayed itself in perfidious and capricious profusion in his eyebrows, which locked bushily across his forehead.

Julie felt very jolly and very much at home. Mr. Calixter, during the course of the meal, waved away the most charming salad of sea-green cucumbers and curling lettuce leaves. He explained that a lettuce leaf over here might be a death warrant, as cholera was more or less present all the time — though that fact could never be impressed upon the Chinese cook.

Cholera! Julie sat up with a start. In this fairy land could such a terrible hydra stick up its head? Mr. Calixter told her about a number of other things that flourished in the islands, things which she had always categorized as traditions of the Middle Ages — small-pox, leprosy on beggars' outstretched hands, all the dreadful medieval list!

"It is a hard uphill pull we have before us over here, and the top of the mountain nowhere in sight." Mr. Calixter looked grave.

"And the natives are fighting us, all over the islands," Mrs. Calixter remarked, "and doing it in a particularly barbarous and senseless way."

"Have you any idea as to where you are going?" Mr. Calixter demanded.

Julie moved restively: "No — but it all sounds rather awful."

"Well, we're aiming to — and will make this the finest colony on earth. There are the men here to do it; men with the genius for pioneering, and a glorious fever to break the wilderness. The Department of Education is the greatest idea of all. You must re-

member that. It is the only thing that will touch the soul of the people. All the rest, just yet, seems to fall outside."

"There are hosts of interesting people here," said Mrs. Calixter, smiling cryptically. "People with histories made over night, and making history themselves splendidly, too. Perhaps you will stay in Manila. At any rate, you will catch an unforgettable glimpse of — all this, as you flit through. This afternoon, late, we will drive on the Luneta, where you will see a cross section of the whole East. Later, we are to go to a ball. All the empire-builders will be there. So keep your young soul awake."

After luncheon everybody mysteriously disappeared. Julie was left alone in the silent, hot, perfumed world. Not a sound came to her from anywhere; existence seemed suspended. What had become of the contents of the world?

She decided to open up her baggage — which, thanks to Mr. Calixter, had already arrived — and lay out the dress she should need for the evening. After five o'clock, Mrs. Calixter had said, Manila drove forth in full dress to the Luneta. Julie gathered up a ball gown and went over to the glass to appraise its relationship to herself. She was enchanted with the maturity of the garment. Through it she and the world met at last; it suggested the finally opened door of the universe in which she was free to find her dreams. She whirled, a gay dervish, in front of her mirror.

Suddenly she stopped, awed by the strange reflection she saw of herself. Odd multiplied personages attenuated from it. She couldn't begin to think that she knew them, though each at an angle offered some startling familiarity. She had merely wished to exact

from the mirror reassurance of her woman's incontestable inheritance, but these strange images carried her out of the background of the glass into a boundless territory of conjecture.

Motionless now she beheld reflected a unique, youthful face framed by silvery blond hair, with a pair of green eyes of unusual hue, while flung upon the face, as upon a screen, was an abstraction of personality like a superimposed self. This abstract personality revealed itself tangibly, on occasions, in a transfiguration of light disclosing something inscrutable, eternal, and absolute.

A cryptic sentence of her aunt's flashed through her mind. "There's a singular thing that comes into your face —" which was followed by another, "You think you are strong. It will take many a road to show you that you are not." That old subjection was over now, forever. Julie shivered a little.

She went back to her unpacking; but as she drew out the airy charming dresses a sudden dissatisfaction with them seized her. Their expensive beauty was all wrong. She had seen at once that pioneer women garb themselves very plainly for the day's work — and her work indubitably was to be of the plainest.

For particulars concerning a suitable wardrobe, Julie had consulted a schoolmate back home, the daughter of an army officer, who in her eighteen years had never bought a garment of her own. The inspired inventory they had worked out together Julie might, she now felt, have to reckon with later as a force of fate. Her aunt having been called away to the bedside of a sister, Julie, the reins quite off, had gone in quest of clothes as if she were walking the Milky Way, looking for free stars. She had selected and bought in a

glory of mood that beheld the world at her disposal. An exultant thing, this wardrobe of rejoicing garments that fairly caroled the elated moods of youth. Quite the wardrobe with which to set out to conquer the world.

Julie stared at it. The fatality of that delicate mass! Her uncle's face, aghast at the riddle he appeared to confront in her, rose before her. And the bitter complication of bills that could not be met, huge heedless bills that he had told her in his desperation she must somehow face. There wasn't a thing in the world he could do for her any more. He would get somebody to lend her the money for the present; which would amount to an actual mortgage upon her existence, with so small a salary and with her agent's commission to pay. "Poor little Argonaut," he had called her, "setting out with the intuition of a nineteen-year-old girl as a divining rod of the world, ignorant of the values of money or men!"

Julie closed the door rudely on the dresses, and slipped downstairs to seek brighter diversion in the hot, fragrant world.

She passed admiringly the statue of the Godmother of the New World, standing in her sweeping robes looking out across the sea to the Spanish Main. Splendidly believing Isabel, whose faith in the vision of a Genoese captain gave a new world to men!

Just beyond were two school houses. Julie wondered wistfully if she would be assigned to one of them. It would be very lovely, in this flower-scented spot, right under the shadow of the ancient stone church across the street, to bring wisdom to this people. She smiled at herself. How much of the world's wisdom had she, young, terribly young thing that she was?

She moved meditatively toward the church, scents of tropical flowers on every side of her.

The church was of aged gray and battered stone, with the single white effigy of a saint guarding the worn entrance. There was moss in every crevice of its strong sides, which stood out like great gaunt ribs. Near by, in a wild area of sun-dried grass, was the refectory, ruthlessly severe in its economy of lumber. The resistless fecundity of the tropics encroached upon all this grimness; vines were flowering over the frowning vortices.

Julie stepped through the faded green door. At once the hot world slipped behind her. In the dim shadowiness, she stood staring wonderingly about. She had been in Catholic churches many times, but this was like none of them. The gray pillars were painted with the sunset colors of the East. The dome, full of stars and suns and portraits of the Deity, suggested a rather crowded Mohammedan Heaven. The altar, shining silver twenty feet high, was gorgeously hand-carved, and upon it, in white brocaded satin and pearls, stood Mary. In one of the smaller naves, there was a small statue of Christ, terribly sweating blood.

Julie tiptoed across the bare stone flags. A couple of women were kneeling in the silence, and one or two tragically old men, slowly and painfully with wrinkled hands telling their beads. The women were with child; the old men, their own concern done, prayed for the world.

To the right of the altar, she heard a soft murmur of sounds, where in a side chapel a priest in a black cassock stood by a font administering the baptismal service to a tiny brown baby in a very long pink satin robe. The godmother held the baby, while the bare-

footed native mother stood apart. Another Christian into the fold! Julie was struck by the priest's face, the fine pity he turned upon the futile little brown mite.

Julie moved on. As she was about to step out, the priest passed her. She stopped him.

"May I ask the name of this church?" she faltered uncertainly. What she wanted to ask was the significance of it all.

A tired shadow crossed the priest's face. "Saint Francis Xavier's," he said. Then he stood and looked about him, and the shadow grew.

"It is beautifully decorated," Julie ventured.

"It is one of the Christian churches of the Orient," he said. "Is this the first one you have seen?"

"I only arrived to-day. I am stopping with the Calixters. I am a teacher." She added this a little proudly.

His manner altered. "The Calixters are friends and parishioners of mine. You are the young lady they told me they were expecting. I am Father Hull."

Suddenly he made a gesture to the gorgeous mystery about him. "You are not a Catholic? Then this can not break your heart. Did you expect," he asked, "to find a bonze in here dealing paper prayers?"

Then, with an abrupt change of manner, he asked her about her work. She told him she had no idea where it would be. Everybody over here seemed to be very busy; it would no doubt be real work and hard. She told him naïvely about her old ambition to go as a nun to the Leper Islands.

He shook his head. "I hope," he said, regarding her with a sudden keen penetration, "that you will not go very far away. I have been a soldier, as well as

a priest. I have tramped through the jungles of many of the islands."

"Will you stay here all your life?" she asked in awe.

The priest looked at the blazing landscape. His shoulders drooped. Finally he said, "Where on earth is the priest of God so needed as in this wilderness of darkened souls? If I can ever serve you, let me know." He turned toward the stark rectory.

Julie stood on the spot, and watched the black cassock disappear.

Rousing herself, she walked down the street, stopping to peep wonderingly over the tops of old walls at the contents of gardens, at gay dwellings gleaming like bright fruit or gorgeous birds' eggs out of the giant foliage. Before one house, most orientally imposing of them all, Julie stopped in amazement.

This dwelling was so extraordinarily different from her conception of human habitations that her fancy coupled it with pillared pagodas. It was painted in a number of strong colors, which, as in none other of these strange houses, made a singularly stirring harmony, even in the spectrum of startlingly tinted pillars supporting the great galleries. Orchids — elfin, super-mundane faces, and air-plants, free from the bondage of the earth, swung like stars in the soft evening wind from the balconies.

Strange flowers, mysteriously unfolding in the tree-tops, showered the coming twilight with a delirious fragrance. All about the boundaries of the garden towered cocoanut palms, looking with their clean trunks like magic beanstalks leading to higher regions; on the ground were large, brown cocoanuts, their milk spilling

over the earth. Ripe fruit hung from many trees; bananas, like huge golden branches, and a strange fruit that looked like little green hedgehogs hanging upside down in the high foliage.

Over the garden the light of the lowering sun lay now like the glow of Aladdin's lamp, illuminating it to supernatural dimensions. Over in one end of it a little grizzled Malay dwarf, perfect in his proportions even to his uplifted tiny hands, with the aid of a device on a long pole, was cutting flowers from the tops of bushes and trees. Julie, staring at the surprising little being and not perfectly sure what he could be, saw him examine with intentness the insides of the flowers as they fell, as though he might expect to find wrapped up in the great blossoms another of his kind. A young monkey danced down a tree-trunk, and commenced scattering the dwarf's store. The mannikin pounced upon him, and whimsically thrust one of the golden bells of blossoms upside down on the little furry head.

Of a surety this was a Caliph's mansion. Julie gazed in longingly, venturing at last inside the gate. In a Chinese ginger-jar a little yellow flower caught her eye. In this oriental and magic garden to find so strange, so alien a thing as an English primrose blooming! It was not a very robust primrose; indeed it was faint and small. Yet clearly it was more carefully tended than anything else in the garden.

Out of a green and bronze lodge a keeper emerged to investigate her. The sun of the East had burned him to all but a cinder. Humbly respectful, he waited for her to speak. Julie explained in broken Spanish that the garden was so beautiful that she had been tempted to enter. She would like to know who lived in this little kingdom.

The queer old wrinkled creature looked quizzically at her, "*Una hija del país*," he answered.

"A daughter of the country!" What ever could the old man mean by this cryptic reply? She looked about hesitatingly.

Just then from the indiscernible depths of the great house, an arm decorated with a wide gold band thrust itself out of a cloud of long, black hair, and pushed back the half-opened sliding shutter. A darkly beautiful figure appeared up there. In response to a gesture from it, the keeper strode toward the balcony. The figure spoke to him, and he turned back to Julie.

"My Mistress says that the garden is at your disposal, and for you to go where you please."

Julie moved curiously a few steps toward the balcony. The gold bands on the arms of the princess up there glistened alluringly down at her. A flashing brunette face came out of the shadow of the dense, splendid sweep of hair. It looked down out of a startling and incongruous pair of violet eyes. As this personality was not at all the setting for them, Julie wondered how they had come about.

They played upon the girl with a flame of interest, but their possessor did not speak. Conversation, Julie reflected, was not perhaps included among the gifts of Eastern women. This woman, she felt, had more subtle modes of expression. With her deep, understanding silence, her flashing disclosures in gestures and glance, speech would no doubt be a tardy revelation. Her sense of repose disquieted Julie, reminding her in its singular quiescence of that human becalmment that had at the first so disturbed her in this land. The blue eyes further perturbed her with their interrogations — unanswerable questions: Why she had come

into this atmosphere, and what she dared to think she would achieve in it. The Caliphess in the balcony managed to convey an impression of proprietorship to this sphere, and to exact some sort of explanation for Julie's appearance in it.

"I am a stranger —" Julie began "— it is all very wonderful to me"; she paused and looked around her with a sense of inadequateness.

"I knew that you did not belong here —"

The woman above spoke at last, using England's English, with once in a while the flicker of some strange intonation, like the out-cropping of a subconscious tone. "But where did you come from?"

"The States — San Francisco!" Julie replied.

A change flashed across the mobile twilight face.

"They keep coming! What," after a pause, "do you expect to find?"

Julie did not reply at once. Ah, that was asking the riddle! Her gaze roamed over the wondrous garden and palace. The sphinx above read the look.

"This garden," she informed Julie, "has been here for centuries — and more."

"So of course it wouldn't do me any good to want it!" Julie laughed outright. "And, you see, I am quite awfully poor."

"But you come to — take something — all of them do."

Julie sobered. "I came — but of course you wouldn't understand — I came —" She sought for the articulation of the high and splendid mission. Words came forth disjointedly when she sought to give form to that inner fervor. The lady in the balcony listened, and as she listened to the halting speech a change passed through her blue eyes and vanished.

"How old are you?" she demanded.

Julie replied that she was nineteen.

A frown came between the splendid brows. "That is not young in the East. We begin early to experience over here. We are not afraid of life. We do not keep the young half their existence in swaddling clothes. It is only too plain that you are not a woman, in spite of your years — and the things that you are inconceivably set upon doing. Perhaps you are married."

Julie flushed. "You see, I was considered still too young for that. I was in school."

"Did you learn in that school to live life — here? Ah, I think not. And you may go any place, and to any thing. You were not old enough to be married or to live your own life — but you were old enough to attempt — this fearful thing. My friend, go back to your home. You are too young. It is written in your face."

"But I have no home anywhere. All this wonder is yours; how fortunate above fortune you are!" Julie looked wistfully up at her from the ground.

The lady receded a little from the balcony, and the shadows dropped heavily on the twilight face. "Am I?"

Again she spoke. "What is your name? I want to see you again. One does not see every day a little Atlas who is going to lift the world on its back. You promise?"

"Indeed I do!"

Julie sped through the gold-tipped shadows. Mrs. Calixter was late in her dressing, and Julie was so concerned over the low-necked gown that she had been commanded to wear for the drive on the Luneta,

and so concerned later over what she saw when she got there, that she forgot for the time to ask about the garden and its fair owner.

"The Luneta is an open-air reception in this one wonderful hour of the day, my dear. Did you have a nice nap?"

Julie smiled. Naps at nineteen, when every moment counts!

Mrs. Calixter regarded pensively this freshness of the dawn. "May it be the top of the morning to you always! Look at me." She pointed to her bloodless face and sun-faded hair. "The East drinks you up after a while, body and soul. We're dust that God needs to breathe on again. Don't let it swallow you!"

"It's marvelous though, like a dream," Julie murmured. "I hope I'll never wake up."

The Luneta proved to be an elliptical drive, picturesquely verging upon the sea. The winds and the water at this hour contrived to make it the single cool spot in the city.

A native band, led by a remarkable negro musician, played haunting music of the sorrows and loves of the earth. The drone of the waves lashing upon the rocks mingled with the melody. The sun setting behind an island over in the sea, fantastically enkindled the city, making it appear with its gleaming domes like some citadel of the unbeliever reclaimed in this Crusaders' light. Julie had never seen such deep and powerful colors. They stunned her mind, yet engendered in her a strange exhilaration, a subtle invitation to plunge behind those shadowy walls and follow their secret. The light shivered into shadows; the falling night dropped enchantment over the city.

Carriages swept by with the races of the earth in them; quiet-faced Englishmen staring pensively out to sea as if to discern in the distance a certain blessed island that lay over there; Spaniards with brooding, Moor-like faces, adventuring still in the East after their country had withdrawn forever out of the New World; close-cropped, investigatory Germans, eager traders all over the East; native families of the better class, dressed stiffly in European costume — a concession to the new age — and riding proudly behind American horses; Chinese women in jade and brocade, beside their funereally garbed husbands; East Indians, Japanese, Anamese, Koreans, Armenians — and faces that belonged to no race or clime, intermediates of the white, dark and yellow peoples, circling round the edges of this phantasmagoria like will-o'-the-wisps. And last, there were feverishly alive Americans, with an inexpressible urgency in their attitude — soldiers of the empire, here to make their fortunes and the fortune of the land.

It was a little frightening, this hodge-podge of stranger peoples met at a single point out of the world. Julie noticed how few American women there were. The land was still too tumultuous for their advent. She faced nervously the curiosity of so many men.

Every face was counted in Manila, Mrs. Calixter told her.

A great many carriages stopped to visit with Mrs. Calixter. Julie saw one passing, which of all the procession claimed her attention. A tall young man with a tawny head from which he had swept his hat rode in it — his face turned to the sea winds.

Julie looked, and wondered. Who could he be? In this cavalcade that vivid personality of power and

strength blazed indelibly apart. When he turned his face, a recollection of a child's highest dreams flashed through her sensibilities in a single word — Excelsior! She could not have explained how his youthful stirring face had recalled that supreme childish fervor.

"Who is he?" she asked. It was so clear that he was somebody of note in this world.

Mrs. Calixter followed her gaze. "A Prince of the East," she said whimsically. "An Irish-American Haroun-al-Raschid, naïvely engaged in the recrudescence of the East. We call him The Mayor of Manila. He believes that it shall transcend all other cities of the earth; he pours himself and his substance out over it. We are going to his home to-night. He gives entertainments famous all over the Archipelago — and is a bachelor."

"Barry McChord is one of the most striking of all the empire-builders," added Mr. Calixter. "He is determined to make this colony a gospel of conviction to the East. We are the beacon, he believes, which has come to light the darkness. We are to fire the dead ancient nations into immortal life, and make the East one sublimated republic. You can understand how a young and Quixotic man with such tremendous ideas does remarkable things. He has a hand literally in everything — in education, public health, illumination, public gardens, schemes for first-class hotels to replace Eastern inns, the development of the university, hospitals and theaters. Manila is the theater in which he is staging his Far Eastern drama. When his play of sublimated Eastern civilization is ready, he will summon all Asia to attend."

As they drove away, detaching themselves from the human caravansary, Julie looked back upon the rough

and struggling mass of humanity which was wresting destiny out of the standardless East, and sensed over all the exiles a pervading pensiveness, an air of waiting till the stroke of fate should open the gate.

CHAPTER II

THE Mayor of Manila lived in the Walled City, although most Americans had chosen the space and coolness of the outside districts.

His house was very old, and stood close to the ancient walls, overlooking the ocean. Its gardens lifted the graceful shadows of trees over the tops of the high lichened walls and out into the world. The house was in the ecclesiastical locality that had so strangely impressed Julie that afternoon.

In company with the Calixters, she entered the inclosed estate and found herself beneath the towering shadow of a great white house rearing so high above the walls that the glow of light pouring from the opened window spaces of the upper regions seemed almost to belong to the starred canopy of the night.

These upper regions presented an appearance of spacious stately halls with very high ceilings and brilliantly polished floors. Pieces of handsomely carved Spanish furniture were disposed about the room, and some huge darkened paintings of Spanish captains who had come this way hung on the walls.

The people, however, made the atmosphere of these rooms. At first, Julie thought she was in a dream. People from all the unheard-of places of the earth seemed collected here. Such queer little brown women, moving about on their fairy feet, in long gorgeous trains, like gay little peacocks; and their men, mailed in European evening dress—as if it were armor donned for the eternal triumph of civili-

zation. Most of them were painfully polite, Julie thought; with a touch of humility in their politeness. Spain had not been very long gone, and even *mestizos* and rich Filipinos had not figured in her social lists.

The Sultan of Sulu, temporarily absent from his own dominions, appeared much satisfied with the stir he and his preposterous pearls were creating. "Holy Mary! Such as the very gates of Heaven are made of!" one dusky maiden exclaimed in rapture.

"An illiterate Malay, making an artistic collection of wives, and deliberately decking himself out with those things as a decoy. He's perfectly odious," Mrs. Calixter declared.

Julie saw diamonds as big as hen's eggs on these brown nabob's wives, but the pearls dramatically obscured everything else.

"I'm very fond of Barry McChord," murmured Mrs. Calixter, "but I don't subscribe to some of his guests."

Their host was discovered in the front room, a blond young man moving around the room in a white mess jacket. He came across to greet them.

Julie looked up to the face she had seen on the Luneta, the gay, young *excelsior* face with the vivid hair, through which he stressfully rumbled his fingers as he talked.

He had an ardor of being that communicated itself electrically to those around him. Julie felt suddenly on fire again. He looked attentively at her, as if there were something about her that called up some association. She wondered how he came to be so strong and so magnificent, and to attain this golden blaze of power out of which he shone like a prince.

They were separated before they could have any-

thing to say to each other. Mrs. Calixter wanted Julie to meet somebody "very special." As that was precisely what she had been doing, Julie wondered why she had to be led away.

Streams of fantastic people blocked their way. Refreshments made into the most fanciful forms were proffered them from great nara wood tables, such as might have served for a mediæval feast. Every one was going about his own picturesque business; love-making was coming into play down under the lanterns in the gardens, where the native musicians were making music to draw one's heart out of one's breast.

In the midst of a sudden bursting triumphal strain, Julie stopped to behold what she believed to be a queen, with her train—a woman of such an opulent type of beauty, of such vivid tones of costume and improbable profusion of jewels, that the eye for an instant was overwhelmed. Mrs. Calixter whispered that this was the famous Isabel Armistead, known all over the Orient as "The Empress of the East."

"Why," Julie exclaimed, staring at her amazed, "that's the lady from the Caliph's garden!" She explained vividly her chance visit of the afternoon.

"A caliphess indeed!" Mrs. Calixter agreed.

"And of course she would look like that," Julie declared. "Oh! tell me about her."

"She is a strange creature, certainly," Mrs. Calixter said. "Her father was an Englishman, I believe; her mother, one of those unanalyzable mixtures of strains you find over here. I think they were married to legitimize Isabel, whose beauty and brilliance were remarkable. She has had the best of education abroad, and is, without the shadow of a doubt, the most deeply clever woman in the East—as well as one of the

richest; for from the submerged mother she received one of the great insular fortunes. At seventeen she was married to Richard Armistead, a middle-aged Englishman of first-rate family, who for years held an important position as head of a bank here. He is in England now, for his health; and there are very strong indications that he will not come back. I imagine Isabel has a way of disposing of inconveniences. That is not so difficult here."

"Why, what do you mean? She hasn't hurt anybody, has she?"

"Not that I know of. But when people are in the way over here, they are just put out of it." Mrs. Calixter dropped her voice. "There's a woman over there — quite beautiful, you see — with no sign about her of being a daughter of the land, yet when she wanted another husband she managed to bring it about. She and the man she wanted, so Mrs. Roxas will tell you, the two of them, just did for poor Tony. He was delicate, and they merely made him die somehow. Yet nobody ever fastened anything on to them.

"This is the land of the new chance. Men and women who never found their chance at home, or who debauched it, are seeking their Eldorado here. Standards, social and moral, are easier here than at home. There's a lawlessness of soul that hangs heavy in the atmosphere. You are too young to see it yet. Even the girls are quite vivid — and illimitably experienced. Whether it is so or not, they give one the impression always of taking the most perilous chances."

She looked penetratingly into Julie's breathlessly intent face. "My dear, you are neither old enough nor strong enough to encounter Manila — a city three centuries old quickened by a new population — new wine

in old bottles! That's why I don't want you to remain over here."

"It's wonderful," Julie murmured with shining eyes "—like an Arabian Nights' dream. I do so want to stay."

Mrs. Calixter's attention reverted to Isabel, who stood not far away. She said that Isabel had been loved by many men of many races, and like an empress of the East, she loved them royally for a day, and then flung them aside. A woman whose blood was part of the East, part of the West — nobody knew just where the division lay. Mrs. Calixter stopped as she saw Isabel approaching. She was looking at Julie.

"Isn't this," she asked, greeting Mrs. Calixter, "my young acquaintance of this afternoon? I feared when she walked out so radiantly into the shadows that that might be the last of her that I should see."

Julie, looking across into the flashing face, concluded that she had never seen anybody who intimated so many human possibilities — unless it were the young host of this occasion. Isabel fascinated her, and made her feel as if some queer Sybil of the Eastern bazaars were summoning her down secret streets.

"You will like Manila very much," said Isabel, drawing nearer to Julie as Mrs. Calixter turned to speak to some one else. "Perhaps you will find what you are seeking — they all seek, whatever they say. But there is always the joy of the day. You Americans are forever trying to steal to-morrow. See that you get your share of the hours and minutes — and come to my house again, as soon as you get your assignment. I know the islands, every spot they could send you to. Do this," she urged, with an insistence that captured Julie. Her train swept her onward.

Julie suddenly saw their ~~host~~ come out and accost Isabel in the glowing spot under the central lamps. He bowed laughingly before her, and Isabel's warm, enchanting face swept off in the dance, close to his. Julie paused thoughtfully.

A handsome girl in shining blue gauze stepped up to her, and was presented by Mrs. Calixter as Ellis Wilbur.

"Barry says that you have just arrived, and that I must tell you about everything. I think he meant everybody. It must all be so bewildering and strange, and so hard to catch up with. Leave her in my hands,"—Ellis turned to Mrs. Calixter—"you couldn't for anything say the things I'm going to, and I don't pretend that it won't be fun."

Reverting to Julie, with an air of light concern, she went on: "I hope you are not going to any of those dreadful little islands where they are sending such tragically unsuspecting teachers. Papa and I have visited some particularly atrocious ones—the Moham-medan group, away south, my dear, and so called because they live right up to the worst tenets of the Prophet. Moros are a nerve-shattering experience, they literally bristle with knives; and are always breaking out into massacres. It's too big an emotion for me to seek the wilderness. But over here the game seems usually to over-shadow the risk."

Miss Wilbur's gaze, which had roved to the dancers became suddenly alert. "Ah," she commented, "Isabel blooming like the 'Song of Songs'! Have I a terrible little inkling of what that might mean?"

"For whom does Isabel bloom?" Julie demanded curiously.

But the quaintly disclosive Miss Wilbur became un-

accountably reticent. She remarked carelessly: "Isabel cares transcendently for that Ancient of Days, herself.

"If Leah Chamberlain," she went on in an unchanged tone, "would come in skirts up to her knees, she would create a much more unlabored effect than she is at present attempting with those classic black silken limbs of hers."

For Julie's enlightenment, she pointed out a woman with flaming hair and spectacular eyes, who seemed altogether too resplendent for the ordinary purposes of life.

"Leah keeps the emotion of the Empire astir," Miss Wilbur declared. "She is one of its phases. She lives in a flame always, and transcends the bonds of mere husbands and other things. The husband, a drab creature, lives in barracks out of town. Leah puts up at the Oriente and spreads her splendid wings. What are the feelings of a gold-tipped goddess anyway? Lovell is bent Burmese fashion before her — Lovell is a bank-man in Hongkong who is about to come into a big title. He aspires, at cross purposes, to power and to Leah."

A woman with dark hair drawn over a glistening pearl of a face passed on the arm of a plump, florid man. "Another Woman of the Empire. That Madonna face, my dear, has seen the floor of hell. That woman has experienced the deepest brutality of the East. She was a little New England factory girl, whom her profligate lover abandoned in a Chinese port. In her Hegira, she found her way here, and became one of the famous white *hetirae* of the city. That's what they amount to here, and along the coast. When you see particularly handsome women driving alone

along the Luneta, don't ask who they are. Abernathy came along and married her, right out of the district where they live, and now she has a great house, with all the money in the world. But as isolated as if she were in a cave. I went there once, and she took me up on her high lonely roof, from which she said she could look out over the city and watch it marching ahead. Her heart was breaking with loneliness; the old days when she ruled men were gone, but she wanted to see this thing through. Just another obscure sentinel who is sticking to her post.

"I have an idea that Mrs. Calixter has been telling you things about the women. She doesn't understand — her generation can't — that they've got the chance, and the second chance, over here. They can do a lot and get away with it — and no hair-lines drawn. But they have freedom of choice — they can make or break themselves. A few, of course, are clear outside — like Isabel, who has nobody to account to and to whom not even the roughest rules apply. She is one of the laws here herself. Don't try to measure her by rule of thumb, she hasn't any measure; Isabel has more freedom of will than it is safe to think about. She is moreover staggeringly rich — and helpful; and I see as much of her as she will allow — although papa, who belongs to Mrs. Calixter's tiresome era, is inclined to discourage this intimacy. Yet I have discovered," Miss Wilbur asserted calmly, "that he goes privately and takes tea with her. He considers it a very dashing experience, no doubt. She probably tells him a great deal about the Islands, which he believes like gospel. That is he." Miss Wilbur gestured carelessly toward a distinguished looking white-haired gentleman. "So diplomatic-looking,

everybody says! Papa has 'represented' at two courts, and he was completely taken aback when they put him on a democratic job like this. He's on the Commission. But he has caught the fire, like the rest. He is having a very disconcerting second blooming. I used to conceive of papa as a sort of ancient, delicate epigram, and behold, he has come to life! That flower in his button-hole is what they call here the 'Chain of Love.' "

A pleasant, worn-faced Englishman in a singular semi-uniform costume, with a dark sash knotted around his waist, bowed to Miss Wilbur.

"That sash? Nobody knows what it means. Perhaps it's an emblem of the Republic of the Sun — that's the fantastic name somebody has given to the impossible Utopia that these men are trying to bring about in the East, after Campanelli's or Plato's dream; I forgot which. They believe the East is to awaken tremendously. Talk with Barry about it. But this gentleman, Matfield-Barron, broods over the situation with all the lonely passion of the expatriate; it's the last thing left in his soul. Most of the others mean, like the Chinamen, to 'go back' after the day is over, but Matfield-Barron will stay on. He was an officer in the British army, and was cashiered out of the service over in India — something about a woman, who is said to have used him as a shield for another man. So he drifted here. I hope for his sake they don't break the Scheme, back there in the States. I can't bear to think of that homeless wanderer growing old in the East with no Utopia to love. And I'm crazy about that absurd sash! It waves a breezy, Anglo-Saxon defiance to the apathy of the East."

A blond, blunt man who looked like a shortened

Hercules exchanged a word with Julie's companion, and walked on.

"That's Holborne — organized the Constabulary; says he's an Englishman — born in Malta, rather an interesting place to be born in. I think that Holborne is a true soldier of fortune, and that when a bigger fight comes up he will move on. Rumor has it that he is bound up in Isabel's spokes; but so many men are that! It is written in his steel eyes that no woman shall upset his universe.

"But of course the main force in this unseen republic is Barry McChord. He is the Titan stoking this furnace. He is one of those persons you want to have around — he makes the world so exciting to live in! He has gone mad over this rough-and-tumble colony, and over the whole East. He's in love with the torn-up landscape, the scaffoldings, the skeleton bridges, and diverted rivers. Cleaning, rehabilitating, straining — he is trying to carry the East on his back!

"And now I must relinquish this personally conducted tour," Miss Wilbur concluded; "I see a circle of prospective partners frowning at me for having hedged you in so long. It doesn't matter, however; for the dancing is only just getting under way."

As Ellis Wilbur had implied, young men got themselves brought up, and claimed Julie. Diffident, high-colored Englishmen, whimsically satirical over the paradoxes of the East, or wearily skeptical; her own countrymen, gloriously beginning and flushed with the enterprise. These last had come to civilize Asia, and made one feel that they were electrified with their job; they had the air of being engaged in a national knight-errantry. Their mood kept the air stirred.

Julie was bewildered by all they found to tell her — strange recitals that made an Odyssey of the hopes and ambitions of many men. It set up in her a fresh excitement.

Suddenly, looking up, she found her host before her.

"It has been quite impossible to get near you. I have sought you once as my guest, again as the very newest lady, and several times after that because I seem to have remembered you some place."

Julie laughed. "Perhaps that all comes of my being so new. To-morrow I shall have dwindled back into proportion."

"Come and take a walk on the gallery," he invited; "I want to show you the wall."

They passed through a doorway out to a high gallery that brought them suddenly very close to the stars. Julie faced them as astonished as if a corner of the sky had been unpinned.

"Do these belong to your garden?" she asked laughingly.

"To my Neighbor's Country." He smiled. "I don't transgress." He laid his hand on a dark line of stones. "Here are the walls. They keep the Pacific out of my estate."

A stone's throw over the walls Julie saw the purple stretches of the ocean that used to come gloriously rushing through her gate of golden dreams. She listened a moment to its roar rising above the music in the garden. Then she stared over the city. Before her, mysterious, shadowy, inexorable, the ancient ramparts rose, inclosing a black, fantastic city with unearthly towers and domes. A city of fate!

The girl shivered with mingled ecstasy and fear.

"Why do you live here? You might have chosen other cities."

"So might you — but there was destiny. I chose Manila for many reasons — some of them hardly definable. There was something from the first that spoke out to me from it, that whispered from every one of its old stones — an atmosphere of profound human struggle, as if for centuries the place had been battling with forces that go back into the dark borderland of human genesis. The human spirit at its darkest, lowest ebb. It seems to me that is the curse that we have come to lift — the curse of the whole East."

"Have you been here very long?"

"Almost since the beginning, the Year One with us —" He rested his arm upon the surface of the wall, and looked across at the stretches of singing waters just beyond.

"Would you like to hear how I came?"

Her eyes sparkled. "Everybody's been telling me to-night how they happened to come, but most of all I want to hear about you."

"It was fate with me. I was shipwrecked off the coast of Mindanao in a typhoon. I had been trading up and down the East, here and there, with headquarters in China. I had been round the earth, and I had seen most of the cities, but I had never seen the one that I believed was my particular fate. I'd always had ideas of what I wanted to do in the world, but I'd never gotten much nearer than dreaming them. Then came the shipwreck and the whole New World for me. We were rescued by the Moros and were traded round among them for a while. They led us

along the tops of stony mountains and told us every day when the sun went down that that was the last of it we would ever see. A couple of our men died. After we'd been led about for months and our *datto* had made up his mind to kill us, his force was attacked by another chieftain. We bolted straight into the jungle, and nearly went crazy getting out. Finally in an open boat we gained the sea, and just drifted until we reached a town where a commercial steamer had put in. I got aboard, and came upon this city, and here in this unexpected corner of the earth I found my countrymen engaged in the biggest thing I'd ever seen.

"I knew right off that it was here that I belonged, and that this city was my fate. A boat was going out for Shanghai with the captain of it a friend of mine, and he wanted to take me on; my affairs had been going well across the China Sea. But I told him good-by—I had decided to take my chances along with the rest of my people.

"I started in with a trading company that knew my firm, and I showed them what I'd learned about selling goods to the Chinese—you see I knew all the big Chinese concerns. I got to be a partner and then I bought the other fellows out—and so I came to do the things I'd set my heart upon. I'm Irish, you see, Irish-American, and my heart had burned with all sorts of things.

"And you?" he interrogated suddenly. "Did those green eyes lead you East? They are like the jade of a temple god—the color of the farthest reach of the sky."

Julie smiled dreamily. "When I was a child this same ocean used to flow in from across the world

and tell me stories of some of the lands it touched. I knew a long time ago that I was to come."

"And how did you get to come?"

"I am to teach!" and she stopped, wondering within herself.

"Ah, there are simply no limits to that. Peaceful Penetration, quickening beats in this great life. If we can get these white men and women to stick to their out-posts, we'll win, in a few years. But to give up life completely, and sit alone in the night among the palms in a desolate bit of jungle with one's soul roving out over the world and the stars in terrible longing — that is asking blood tribute, as I know only too well!"

"And does it seem to you that it will count?"

"It will count inconceivably in that biggest of struggles — the powers of light against the powers of darkness."

"But right now?" Julie queried.

"We're getting the East from this foothold — and the East, as you will come to know, is too big, too monstrous a fact to have against our cosmos. We think the moment has come when, by making clear our ideals here, we can recast her at will."

"I see," said the girl slowly, "— and atoms count. Why," she broke off, "does one feel the shadows so here, quite cold shadows and pitiless? Mrs. Calixter seemed to make me feel that it was all a vast tract of quicksands which finally at some point, would grip one's feet."

"A society like this seems to offer no place to a young girl. You," he mused, "belong to my Neighbor's Country."

And thus out of this great big life pattern, this

tremendous human arabesque, he thrust her into the limbo of the inconjecturable — out of the work in which he, with his quick vivid face, looking oddly white and visionary in the moonlight, had a star part! Standing there among the shadows of the universe, with the work of men's souls lifted out of her participation, her heart dropped.

"I came," she said, trying to assert some title to this New World, "because I wanted to give a little of my life — before I should grow old and forget."

She looked up and found him staring at her with a strange intensity. He appeared as startled as if she had just walked into his soul, a visitant from the Neighbor's Country he had talked about. Julie was leaning against the wall, and for an instant they deeply regarded each other. It seemed to the girl that some powerful experience was seizing possession of her — as if a flash of lightning illuminated her being — deeper than she had ever dreamed. Just for a second she felt, on unimaginable heights, a moment of mystery and wonder and high enchantment.

Some one stepped out upon the gallery and the spell that had caught at the stars broke. The girl quiveringly came back to her surroundings, wondering what invisible places she had touched.

She heard her companion's voice saying hurriedly, "I'm called away — in the midst of everything — on account of an outbreak of cholera in one of the remote provinces. But I shall be back in a few days, and I will see you then."

Her ear caught the definite promise and expectation the words contained, the intimation that their lives had crossed by a stroke of fate.

That night while she undressed with the light burn-

ing low, she reviewed in her mind this first day in the East. She felt as if, from a high seat in some fantastic houdah, she had seen pass a great pageant. Incredibly exciting and splendidly adventurous it all was! Compared to the wall-paper universe of her youth this phenomenal flash of events was unbelievable. To live in a land where things actually happened, where the hours were full, and where with every breath one drew in a bewitching experience! Youth's playground with its everlasting drama impending.

Julie leaned out into the scented darkness and looked around the sky — a nightly custom of hers — a leave taking of God's world. But this imminent heaven with its fearful host frightened her. Nothing was familiar. Strange constellations had preëmpted the place of the old ones. This was not God's world, but a world of many gods, and she wondered, with a little shiver, which one she should propitiate.

CHAPTER III

THE next morning Mrs. Calixter offered to drive Julie down to the Ayuntamiento Building where she was to receive her instructions from the Head of the Department of Education. When Julie came downstairs, she found Father Hull sitting in the carriage, opposite Mrs. Calixter, who had promised him a lift to the Observatory. He greeted Julie with pleasure, and told her that he was on his way to see Father Albus, who was perfecting a remarkable instrument for forecasting the typhoons which periodically tore up the islands in these hazardous seas.

"Its success now seems certain," continued the priest, "thanks to Barry McChord, who has been keenly interested in the invention and has sent to Europe for many delicate appliances to assist the researches of my venerable friend."

"He has so many things to be interested in," Julie commented with sudden wistfulness.

The priest looked across at her: "I think I should say he has the interest for so many things."

"Is it because I am a newcomer," the girl asked the priest, "that things seem to move so bewilderingly fast here — like a dance whose rhythm you can never catch up with?"

"These, my child," the priest replied, "are the Days of the Empire. Those of us who have experienced them will remember them always. Conquest and prowess of arms have put a dangerous fire in

men's veins. We are reaching out for more than human hands were meant to grasp. When men are rich overnight, and women are scarce as queens, the universe is not stable. Not but that there are some who walk steadily in this fever —" He smiled at Mrs. Calixter.

"I don't count, I'm old," replied that lady.

"Are you challenging youth? Who in my camp fire colony, as I call it, is so safe and sane as my friend Barry? We have worked alongside each other for a long time — and it would be difficult for me to tell what he has been to me."

"The natives call Barry *El Mayor*," Mrs. Calixter told Julie, "and believe that in power he is infinitely above the Governor-General. In so many incorrigible centers of rebellion he has somehow found an effectual compromise."

"The natives reason that governor-generals may come and go — and temporary officials of all sorts; but that Barry is with them for good," Father Hull said. "I don't understand all his aims. Perhaps they are too wide for me, who find my own are more than I can hope to cope with — but what I am very sure of is that he is working always for a better order of things in the world. I, too, am selfishly concerned that he should not go away from here" — the priest laughed; "I have planned that he and I shall grow old here together."

"And what will the ladies who admire him so much say to that?" Mrs. Calixter demanded.

"There are plenty of others for them. If Barry were pinned to one little circle how could he wander off to all the places he's sent to at a moment's notice — like China, and India and Annam? If there were

mumps in his circle, how could he attend to cholera in the larger circles?"

"Well, we'll have to let you have him, I guess," Mrs. Calixter amusedly remarked. She glanced at Julie's thoughtful face. "This young person is on her way this minute to her fate, and I don't in the least like it that a certain red-haired person has the settling of it. Maxwell and George have had a difference — so we can't lift a hand."

The priest thought for a moment. "I should be only too glad to do anything I could. I know Mr. Maxwell — but whether any word of mine would count with him, I can't say. At least I can make the effort. If you can wait a few moments I will go into Father Albus's office, and write Mr. Maxwell a note."

When they had stopped in front of the Observatory, Father Hull bade them good-morning, begging leave to send out the note on the plea of his many pressing engagements.

After he had gone, Mrs. Calixter remarked with anxiety, "He doesn't look well. He's been told again and again to take a trip home. He used to be very strong, but he has gone through many ordeals and borne the brunt of fearful hardship in this new place. His soul has never wearied; it's on fire like all the others, but his body is showing the strain."

She added: "While we were waiting for you to come out, he told me of your meeting of yesterday, and he said that he thought you were too young to follow the trail."

Julie waited in an outer room while the chief of education interviewed personally a long stream of predecessors. These faces showed a great deal of earnest purpose — the fervor of the empire builders, which

Julie had begun to recognize; and yet these people were not to remain in Manila, but were to go out to the most distant, unsettled parts of the Islands, to put into execution one of the most stupendous designs ever launched by any government — to put a whole race simultaneously to school.

Julie listened to the reports these people gave of themselves, and of the wild unheard-of places they were accepting as their assignments, and knew that the small salaries could not be the impetus that was sending them, grave but uncomplaining, into far jungles. Or course they yearned to remain in Manila. They had heard strange tales of the provinces, and knew that more than one of the number trudging their missionary way had been murdered; but they had cast in their lot with the colony, and it was all in the day's work. A strange, intangible spell had caught their souls, and it seemed that the fervor of it must set things aflame.

When Julie's turn came, she found herself confronting an astonishingly tall man with a huge florid head. The education of several millions of beings was the present concern of that head, which gave evidence of the magnitude of the problems confronting it. In times such as these, men are often shot suddenly from commonplace experience into the most enormous undertakings. In this case the call appeared to have been too quick. The man was arrogant in his power, but flustered over his responsibility. All day he had been dealing with a complexity of human desires, which in almost every instance had conflicted with his own. Julie stepped into the moment of greatest tension.

There was a great map on the wall, a scroll of fate to which the Superintendent referred in making his

assignments. There is nothing alluring in a map ever, but this one seemed particularly bleak and strange. The Superintendent frowned at it. "I haven't decided yet, Miss Dreschell, just where I'll send you," he observed in an olympian manner.

He juggled awhile with the fates, while Julie, considerably heartened, decided to take advantage of this critical uncertainty to assist him to a favorable decision.

"I should very much like Manila," she said pleasantly.

The Superintendent's negative mental state vanished electrically. "Every person who has entered this room to-day has said that same thing! You should have come here prepared to go where you are sent."

Julie flushed. "The provinces are still in a state of insurrection," she declared spiritedly. "People are being killed there."

"Civilians are not," the Superintendent exclaimed exasperatedly. "We are sending teachers out to the most remote parts, where there are no troops at all, Miss Dreschell. You will go where I send you, as it is your business to do; and your station," turning to the dreadful map, "will be the small island known as Nahal, in the southern group."

He irately pointed it out, remote, isolated, the last before the Pagan group. Julie stared at the outline, and her heart grew faint. It was the end of the world!

"I shall be going farther South than any one else," she remarked with a break in her voice. Suddenly she put her hand in her bag and drew out the letter which she handed to him.

She watched him read it in curious wonder at the

change that came over her face. "This puts a different light on the matter," he said coolly. "There is no favor that Father Hull could ask in the Philippines that would not be granted at once. I shall endeavor to assign you to the Ermita district in the city."

What, Julie wondered, was the strange power of Father Hull whose words could in an instant revolutionize her fate? Her visionary green eyes fixed speculatively on that spot on the map. "Father Hull said I was to give you the letter," she said slowly, "but I think if you don't mind, I will go where you assigned me."

The Superintendent was uncomfortable. There were other islands much nearer than Nahal to which he might have sent her. He slid an elastic band over a bunch of papers with an irritated snap. "Do as you like, Miss Dreschell — but there is Solano"; he pointed suggestively to a larger island farther north than Nahal. "Conditions are better there, I should say."

"I think I will go where I was assigned," Julie reiterated — which decision seemed considerably further to irritate the florid head. It was clear that he was keenly eager to serve the writer of the letter.

But Julie rose with an air of finality. He stared at her with annoyance; and when she did not alter her mind, he leaned over his desk and jotted down a note. Julie knew somehow that it referred to her. She caught a glimpse of the word Solano, and wondered if he intended forcing her to go there. Evidently he did not, for as she stepped through the door, he apologized perfunctorily for the difficulties of the occasion, and bowed her out with great courtesy. But Julie, looking up into his face, saw that he would never for-

get the person who had challenged his power and caused him to be ashamed of himself. Some time this incident would unfailingly bear fruit.

Mrs. Calixter was aghast. "He has banished you into exile!" she exclaimed. "Could it be because he and George are at swords' points? Did you give him Father Hull's letter?"

"I gave it to him, and he took everything back in a wink, and offered me Manila; but while I sat there looking at my mysterious island, I recalled the faces of some of those teachers, and the face of — a person I met last night, and I asked myself why I should shirk just exactly that which I had come over to do. Why," she added suddenly, "did Father Hull's letter make such an impression? The Church over here must be very powerful."

"The Church hasn't a thing to do with it. It's the man! He's a saint, and the spiritual custodian of the colony. He came over here as the Chaplain of the Twenty-fourth, and marched right alongside the men into every danger. There wasn't a soldier in the regiment that wouldn't have gone straight through Hell at his word. Yet I imagine he found it harder to make them go the other way. He is known everywhere, and by everybody. No one could deny him anything — it's the power of one man's life."

"There seem to be so many over here like that!" Before Julie's half-closed eyes a stream of faces rose. One preëminently stood out, illuminated by moonlight, and fired with the undying fervor of purpose. It was her sub-conscious being which, stirred by the intimations received last night on the roof, had decided in a flash for her in the Superintendent's office.

[With the vision still about her and before her, she

arrived at the home of Isabel Armistead, the woman of Asian mystery.

The dwarf that she had seen before in the garden received her. She had thought that he looked like a child, but she saw now that the queer little creature was of a man's years. She could not resist speaking to him, and the mannikin smiled at her out of his saddened, puckered little face. He showed her upstairs into a *sala* so vast that it seemed literally a sweep of space broken by transcendently carved pillars.

The house was more than a century old, and had come down to Isabel through her inconjectural native connections. Its carvings belonged to an era of Pharaonic hordes of labor, or slavery. The house and the other vast properties of its owner had somehow come down unmolested by official upheavals.

The family was a queer one of many strains; all the East was in its veins. After her husband and her daughter had departed for England, Isabel's mother, it was said, had gone up into a holy mountain to practice witchcraft. At any rate, after a time, she had disappeared, never, apparently, to be heard of again. The influence of this strange mother, Mrs. Calixter had told Julie, was still perpetuated. One native lady of her acquaintance had shown Mrs. Calixter one of the old witch-mother's *anting-antings*, proclaiming that she always wore it, and that it had astoundingly protected all her life, shielding her and her family from all evil and lifting them above the common lot of men.

Julie thought of these strange rumors as she looked about her. The walls were hung with a great many rich embroideries, brilliant silks blooming with the unfamiliar flowers of far kingdoms. It was like walking in a garden of Cathay. The room appeared to

Julie like a chamber of an Eastern palace in a rich pagodaed city: there was furniture of teak-wood black as a Nubian, brought from distant jungles by toiling elephants, all marvelously carved into scaled monsters; there were ivory gods with sleeping faces; curtains strewn with gold, hanging in dim recesses; rugs — that generations of men in almost mythical retreats of the Himalayas had been a century or two in weaving — lying like islands on the shining dark lacquered floor, in which the shadows of the passer-by drowned to endless depths; a pair of sentinel vases higher than a man — made a thousand years ago for an emperor who had become a god — out of their tops a thin ribbon of green smoke curling from hidden incense; and in one corner, hung with flowers, a queer altar to whatever gods Isabel believed in.

Toward this niche Julie bent curious footsteps. The altar was in the shape of a temple, a gilded fantastic thing, wrought in what country it would have been impossible to say. A Green God, like the monstrous genie of a lake, sat cross-legged in the nave of the shrine staring at rows of grotesque faces carved in the walls. The artist had exercised the art of a Leonardo da Vinci; in the face of the little idol there was neither the dead marooned calm of the great Diabutz nor the cruel evil of Mongolian gods. He was just a quiet little deity, green as the far spaces of the skies, sitting thinking in his temple; but there was in his oblivious, impersonal reflection something that clutched at the heart.

Julie glanced up depressed, to find Isabel regarding her.

“What a terrible god!” exclaimed the girl with a shiver. “Is he yours?”

Isabel smiled. "He is the god who is 'on the job,' as you Americans say it. The Great One is *too* great, the philosophers tell us, to have anything to do with us. He has abstract names, and is too isolated by infinity to be prayed to. But this little god, he knows, he knows!"

"Has he a name?" asked Julie, much puzzled by this blatant paganism. The Islands were undoubtedly a very strange place.

"In different lands, we call him different things."

Julie turned from the niche, "I am going to the island of Nahal," she announced. "I have come to see what you can tell me about it."

Isabel's blue eyes widened. "It is far, very far! We shall never hear of you again. It takes weeks to reach there, because no boats run regularly. You can get to Solano in three or four days, if you are lucky enough to catch a boat — from there once in a while a boat goes down to Nahal. It is a small island; the people are Visayans. I really do not know so much about it, you see. It is turbulent, I believe. Is there a military garrison?"

Julie was not sure. A volunteer force had recently been withdrawn from it; Mr. Calixter was trying to discover whether other troops had replaced the volunteers.

"Most of the women have been ordered out of those dangerous places in the South. Have you not heard the things that have been done there? You are foolhardy to have come — some strange madness possesses you."

Julie's eyes took on an abstracted look. "It is a madness that possesses others, too."

"I have not seen it."

Julie looked at her but remained silent. The two regarded each other; Isabel out of her blue eyes, Julie out of her jade-green ones.

"Why do you go? It is not safe. There are places in these islands where white women have never been seen."

Julie's eyes awoke. "I shall have something to do."

"Will you stay in the wilds till you have given the Nahal islanders the higher education? Bah! Why do you wish to waste your youth at such things? You are beautiful, and were made to be admired, not to bury your youth in forgotten islands. You were made to taste life a little richer in the fruit than the rest. And you who could win so much renounce it all to be a spectacled ascetic hanging to the tails of existence. No Spanish woman would dream of doing such a thing! You have come half way round the world to do some vague thing you've set your heart on. Set your heart on life—it owes you much; make it magnificently pay! Did my Green God give you those eyes and that face for the edification of small Malays? Stay in Manila and drink life here where it sparkles and overflows the goblet. I would no more do what you are doing! I might be a nun—that is picturesque and fiercely renunciative. But to be a pedagogue to brown savages!—it is dull to tears. Then,"—as a final overpowering fact—"there will be no men!"

Julie's eyes gleamed disapprobation. "The women of America have many resources. They go along their real way until their real fate overtakes them."

"A single fate! Is there such a thing?" Isabel seemed feverishly to question herself. "I have made a long quest. I ought to know. No, there is no such

thing. It is a tradition they fasten in women's minds, to make them become mothers.

"Look," she continued, turning toward the temple, "I will give you a present, because I am so sorry for you with such a terrible future. You are going out to be a little Atlas — to lift up the world. Tell me, when you return, how much you have supported on your little back."

For an instant Julie was afraid that Isabel was going to present her with the Green God, but she reached within the shrine and drew out, not the God — to Julie's unspeakable relief — but an exquisite circle of jade, clear and green like a tropical lake.

"A jewel from the Green God for you who have his stamp in your eyes."

Julie started. "Some one else told me that."

"Who was it?"

"Barry McChord."

Isabel's lids dropped over her blue eyes. "You know him, then?"

"I met him last night."

"And he noticed your eyes — that way?"

"But nobody will notice them now —" It was absurd to assume that there was the faintest flicker of satisfaction in the other woman's look, Julie thought.

Isabel slipped the bracelet over Julie's wrist. "It has belonged to many women in many ages. Perhaps you will make more history for it. What beautiful bones you have!" she exclaimed. "They are like sculpture — even in your cheeks where the bones of the English go wrong. And your flesh is flawless; an angel might use it to come down to earth. Look at the difference."

She drew Julie's arm up beside her own to the light. "Yours is snowy, way down to the depths; but the light stops under my skin, it can't get down. That is the difference between you and me!" She loosed Julie abruptly. "Ah, well — you are blind. Go hold up the world, and break your poor little back, when you might be ruling the world, like me. All the East, you know, is mine to work my will in."

Because Isabel was of that East, which she so fantastically claimed, Julie took lightly all she said. To boast of swaying empires and of taking kings out of their thrones was part of the inalienable imagery of the East, as were the widely unreal, the impossibly beautiful things in the old Chinese lyrics. Isabel implied that Julie had only to step out of her insignificant profession to find herself ruling the world, the world of to-day, which had such a marvelous capacity for ruling itself. It was strange how something at other moments so exalted could, under this woman's manipulation, become all at once so obscure. Julie, turning to depart, thanked Isabel for the bracelet.

"Remember, I am your friend," Isabel said, "and I will help you at any time you say so. *Adios!*"

Julie left her standing in the center of her magic chamber, its splendor hovering about her, her dark face merging into its richness like that of some forgotten goddess.

With his small powerful arms, the dwarf swung the gate open for her. She looked back at the garden starred with strange flowers, at the tiers of steps and bright pillars which made the house resemble a Babylonian palace, at the light of the stained glass under the blaze of sunlight: in that bizarre house had

lived a woman who had gone out to the tops of mountains searching for spells!

In those moments when Julie cogitated upon matters of human life in connection with the Deity, she conceived Him rather vaguely as a sort of sublime executive, who drew up — sometimes perforce a little hurriedly perhaps — plans of eternal destiny for everybody. Dealing liberally in catastrophe, disease, old age, poverty, and death, He yet conceded, like allowances of candy to children, a certain amount of impermanent happiness; and it was into this arrangement of things that the race was privileged to enter.

She wondered, as she turned from Isabel's gate, who the little Green God was; and whether he had any character by which he would be recognized in the West. She who had started out with a nameless exalted fervor, whose spirit had been skimming like an inspired comet through space, had been suddenly halted before a strange house in which she had encountered disquieting things — things which had brought the comet down to a scented and blooming earth. So do the moods of youth sway in the last wind blowing.

Still nothing caused Julie to change her intentions; not the troubled counsel of Father Hull, given in his tired voice; nor the Calixters' tales of the far, fearful South; nor the exotic arguments listened to in the Babylonian house. She set sail for the South on the day that had been set.

CHAPTER IV

JULIE sat restively on the blistering deck of a small vessel in the harbor of Solano. The *Black Pearl*, which had brought her from Manila, had deposited her in this blazing city — which now lay before her like a peeling off the sun — and had sailed on in the trail of the East Indies. She had been forced to wait an incredible time for the rare chance that would send a boat from Solano to her own world-forgotten island. Even now she would not have been on her way, if a government official had not appeared from Manila and, from Solano, demanded transportation forthwith to Nahal.

It was getting late — late for a day when everybody rises at dawn, when at last there walked across the gang-plank a young man in a Norfolk khaki suit and a white helmet. He was followed by a procession of natives carrying his luggage, which they had so light distributed among themselves that it took some time for the column to transfer itself from land to sea. It took more time, and a knowledge of the coin of the land — which knowledge the young man seemed to have — to compensate these individuals, who raised a protest over the glittering new centavos. The young man was obliged to add to his payment, whereupon the recipients protested more loudly than ever, and would not subside. The captain in disgust contemptuously ordered the gang-plank lifted with them still on it. Life in the East was too prolific anyway.

The young man, who had such a dark skin that Julie concluded that he must be a Spaniard, came forward

with his luggage, which he now conveyed himself, replacing a dozen natives.

When he perceived Julie, he seemed much taken aback, and removed his helmet, revealing a young assured face, a trifle heavy, and a pair of very light blue eyes. Julie looked at him attentively.

He paused, holding his helmet in his hand. It was clear that he wanted to speak. He had the same curious, almost incredulous expression of those armies of men in Manila.

"I beg your pardon," he said, overcome by his desire to address her; "I had no idea I was keeping any one waiting. I understood that I was the only passenger for Nahal." All the time he was speaking his eyes never swerved from her.

"It does not matter," Julie replied, "except for the heat."

The young man sat down not very far away from her, on a chair which he had brought.

Julie leaned over the railing and watched the recession of Solano. Somewhere far off in the sea was her own terrible little island about which she wondered deeply; she remembered now acutely that she need not have gone to that Robinson Crusoe fastness. Father Hull had warned her, and so had every one else. Suddenly an image rose before her, a great youthful frame with a rumpled head. For a moment she seemed to be facing its high and inflexible resolve.

"We are surely bound for No Man's Land!" The young man at her side was addressing her.

She nodded gravely.

The young man went on politely to say that a Spanish Mestizo general was making himself troublesome on the island of Nahal. He was a great bother to the

Government, which was trying to bring strife to an end in order to set up its great emancipation schemes.

"They are over-sentimentalizing the thing — think the bird can be caught by putting salt on his tail. Government wants everybody to lay down arms and listen to the gospel of democracy. Fancy that in the East!"

"It must be a fearful struggle when the people are so unconvinced. There were guns going off all night in Solano!" Julie reflected. "Are there any men and women on Nahal?"

"Oh! of course." The young man made a carelessly expansive gesture. "There are natives everywhere."

"But I mean real people, white people, people that make things happen."

"Hope so. The natives are no good except for background; help along with palms and things to fill up space."

Thereupon the young man introduced himself, and commenced to explain to Julie that he was going to the island to act as Treasurer. He had been a captain of volunteers, and appeared to deprecate his present office. It served in his opinion, however, as a step to higher things. A Filipino had been made governor of Nahal — matter of government policy; but as he didn't count for much, Mr. Purcell — such was the name the young man gave himself — had been sent down to bolster things up. His father was a politician in Iowa, and would look out for his son's advancement. His parents did not approve his roving, oriental life, and wanted him to come home and settle down. He allowed a considerable pause to ensue after this reflection.

For hours the only two persons on the tiny deck, they sat and watched the sea. Later in the afternoon, the sky grew overcast, bringing relief from the intolerable heat.

Finally, a dissolving cloud broke apart on the horizon, and the sun lit up an island green and wild as a new-made world. Julie rose with a cry at the beauty of it. That was Nahal! Mars itself could not have looked more uninhabited. What subliminal, lonely wildness! It called up to her the vision of the wild, moon-swept cliffs of Mindoro, passed at night on the way down to Solano, with its mysterious jungle and without even a light against its primal shores. This little island had ridges of green cones, that looked in the distance like the domes and spires of mosques, all clothed in quiet forests over which the wind seemed scarcely to blow.

The vessel was making for the eastern coast, to a town called Dao, where it was to drop mail. It would then continue to Guindulman, whither both passengers were bound.

At Dao, the Captain said the passengers might go ashore; so Julie and Mr. Purcell went with him in a leaky row-boat into a cove of the harbor, which was bounded on both sides by long gleaming arms of beach dotted with palm trees, their heads bent like pensive thinkers.

A small village barely peeped out from under the foliage of the great tropical trees. A dusty primitive road ran down from the village to the rude pier. They climbed up to it by means of a flight of slippery green stairs, a heroic undertaking for Julie in her white clothes.

To her it appeared at once as an island of appalling

silence. Even the sea out there was not so still. A primitive, all-pervading hush — the deepest she had ever known. A queer sensation came over her of having reached a point in the universe where time was not.

A crowd of natives had commenced quietly to gather. Two white men were approaching; one a young officer in a khaki uniform, with a sword hooked to his belt; the other nondescriptly appareled in an officer's blouse devoid of insignia, a pair of bleached trousers that came considerably above his shoe tops, and a peaked straw hat.

As they drew near, these men looked at Julie in amazement. The Captain presented the officer as Lieutenant Adams. Julie noticed at once the deep shadow that rested upon his thin, troubled face. The other strange-looking gentleman was the Doctor. Outside of these two, the Captain remarked, there was only one white person on this side of the island. At this allusion, Julie noticed strained glances exchanged.

When Purcell got the chance, he whispered to Julie that this third person was the captain in command — perpetually drunk, and frequently insane with delirium tremens. He had been a fearless soldier, and had once performed a hazardous mission for the Government; and he had been put off here, with a one-company command, in the idea that he could do little harm. But this drink-maddened czar in his times of dementia maintained a reign of terror over his small domain that brought it always to the verge of mutiny. Only one thing stood between his brutality and disaster. This was young Adams, who interposed between the captain and his men — and who spent weeks in arrest or confinement for his pains.

"What lives you regulars lead!" Purcell exclaimed

to the Doctor. "Do you think any volunteer organization would stand for that whiskey king? They'd take him out and twist his head off."

Adams frowned. "Let go, before the natives, when the whole blooming show is at stake over here? We're not just a company of infantry. We're the Army! I'd have my own head twisted off first."

"If it were not for Adams," the Doctor said, shaking his head, "there'd be a holocaust, all right. It frequently occurs to me to take to the open sea. But I'd like Adams to go with me, and he keeps Nero so peeved by his altruism that the old monster locks him up; so he can't get away. Miss Dreschell," he continued, turning engagingly to her in his quaintly deranged hat and incoherent costume, "you must really pardon my clothes. As you may not have found it difficult to surmise, I haven't any. I came here a thousand years ago, and never expected to encounter a lady again. I have written to a tailor regularly, enclosing at various times a roll of bills — impossible to send money orders, there being no post-office on this island; but that evil one simply disdains to reply. All the world, by some singular sort of erosion, seems to have receded from us. I shall eventually be reduced to fig leaves — though they are not indigenous to the island, and banana leaves, while dressy and expansive, will not bear needle and thread, nor glue together with any success.

"I hope," he said to her in a lower tone, "that you will talk very nicely to Adams. There is no such thing as speech left in our principality, nor mirth except the laughter of the monkeys in the hills. Our brains are sucked out; never a new idea comes here — save what that black son of Neptune purveys every

two months. Give the lad something to think about in the next cycle of years. And I am asking you privately not to regard me too closely when we ascend the hill. You happened upon me just before my monthly sewing day. There goes our mail." He pointed to a loaded sack that a soldier was carrying up the hill. "It reminds me that there is one thing you don't have to worry about here — that's bills."

The Doctor waved his hand ahead of him. "Behold, the population of Nahal is coming down from the hills to look at you. You are the first white woman to land on this spot. Number this as an indelible day."

Julie was staring with all her eyes. Whereas a handful of people had stood but a short time ago about the wharf, the road and the surrounding vicinity were now black with natives surging in her direction. They formed a solid staring girdle around her, their unblinking eyes riveted upon her.

To them her blond fairness was miraculous. When the Doctor made her take off her hat, and her singular silvery blond hair came forth to view, lighting her dazzling skin, a deep quiet stir went through the crowd. The girl stood abashed in the midst of it. Long, long afterwards, when many others had paid tribute to her beauty, Julie remembered that moment in a wild little spot out of the world.

One grimy little child crept up towards her, and, plucking at her garments, demanded if she were not the Blessed Virgin. The men of the lonely lives turned abruptly. The others followed after them up the hill, Julie's native coterie trailing behind her. They picked flowers for her, and offered her strange sweets.

"A queen for a day!" she laughed to Lieutenant Adams, who was walking beside her. "I shall remember Dao until the end of my life."

"That's the strange part of the natives; they admire our type more than their own. You are absolute beauty to them — very near a glimpse of God. I am going to send your worshipers away now, and ask you to take a walk with me; for you will be here only a couple of hours — two hours out of eternity, and I must talk! It is a long time since I said anything real. Let us waive the world, and consider that we are two people met in outer space at the end of time, and that it does not matter at all what we say." He looked up quickly into her wondering face. "You think I'm mad. What else, in heaven's name could I be?"

She regarded the strained, urgent face, and felt a subtle appeal being made to her — youth in hard straits, to youth.

They strolled down the main thoroughfare of the town. Knitted closely together with foliage, it presented a weird aspect. Adams explained that the Commandant liked this wild growth. They stepped into a side street, and he indicated with a grimly significant nod one house larger than the rest. Adams passed it quickly; but before turning down the lane, Julie glanced back and beheld a great shape at the window, bloated and distorted, the hair standing out all over its head. The man creature up there was in the depth of one of his worst debauches, when for a week he did not touch food but lived in an alcoholic frenzy. He was scarcely human, and Julie, who had never dreamed of the existence of such a thing, fled down the street with a smothered cry. "What is the matter?" Adams demanded.

"He was at the window. Oh! how awful! How can you live here?" A deep shame mantled the young man's grimness. "Isn't he a beast?"

Julie followed her guide up the hill, reflecting that strange lives must be expected to make strange men. Adams pointed out a flat stone for a seat, and, drawing a long breath, dropped down upon another.

"How long have you been here?" he began; "and where do you think you are going? That's what we always want to know."

Julie explained the uncertainty she faced. He looked at her keenly.

"I used to be in Guindulman," he said. "It's one of the three garrisons on the island, including this place and Tarlac — only a battalion altogether."

She returned to him his question — the genesis of everything in the East. "And you — how long?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Year and a half. I've lost all track of time." He pointed to some pensively quiescent hills. "Could you fasten time, or change to them? As it was in the beginning, so it shall ever be, world without end. You get up in the morning and go to bed at night, till your brain reels. I hate this eternity. I want to live or I want to die."

"Why do they leave you? It's wicked!"

"Why do they send a mere child like you to Nahal? We're grist for the mill. In order that big things shall come forth from it, the wheels must grind exceeding fine. You and I are slated for powder."

"This is my private little hell. I've got to keep the old man from running amuck and the men from breaking out. But what I want to tell you right now — because we are going to be such awfully good friends — is that I am sick of my job, and I'm afraid that I'm

going to break out too. I've lost my perspective. They might have let me go out for just a little while. All the time, I'm in insurrection inside. I seem to have slipped some vital moorings — and to be adrift."

"But you wouldn't yield now, after struggling so long?" Julie pleaded. "Oh! I'm so sorry for you!"

He clutched his face in his hands, and looked out through the foliage across the sea. "What is life, anyway? There must be more of existence than what we manage to find. Sometimes I can feel whispers of it. Do you think I'm mad, or just soul-sick of my kind of a world? You see I'm only a poor devil in purgatory, trying — and not succeeding — to fight my way out."

"You have been splendid," she said tremulously. "Does it mean anything to you to know that I think that?"

He straightened quickly. "It means a lot. This hour has put something into my veins."

Suddenly the boat whistled from the harbor. He took her hand, and said with a feeling which he could ill conceal: "The Blessed Virgin did not visit Purgatory for nothing this day." Then he added: "I shall see you. Perhaps they will let me come to Guindulman — Ah, anyway, I shall see you!"

Julie from the boat waved a farewell to the khaki-clad figure standing on the pier, Mr. Purcell watching her intently all the while. "Military gentlemen," he informed the universe in a meditatively resentful way, "are always irresistible to women."

CHAPTER V

IN darkness, rain, and perturbation, Julie landed at her destination. A storm had blown up from the Sulu Sea, to which they were quite close. Before the light had faded, however, the Captain had pointed out as Guindulman a spot in the long, low stretch of gray green against the gray sea, where a lonely torch light shot up in the dusk and was gone. Julie's companion had managed to make the latter part of the voyage somewhat too disturbingly intimate, and she hoped fervently that their ways would soon part.

In a large house near the wharf, they found that a white woman, a teacher, was quartered. She sent word that she would look out for Julie. Mr. Purcell was directed to the Officers' Mess.

Miss Hope, a succinct person with the ineradicable stamp of pedagogical command upon her, greeted Julie, and explained conditions while the girl changed her drenched clothing. Of the two available *intra-suelo* rooms rented from the prosperous native family above, one could be turned over to Julie — the one, the girl noted, that was closest to the malaria-soaked ground. Because of the military occupation, the village was badly crowded.

"The General Superintendent must have known something about this place," Julie reflected; "since he sent you."

"Oh, I know him very well," Miss Hope declared. "He is a very busy man, and cannot be expected to know everything. This is the world's end — but I

came here on my own request. I have a project which obliges me to teach in at least one remote island. My plan is to teach in every country around the world, as far as I can get. In addition to teaching in the States, I have already put in one term in Honolulu, one in Yokohama, another in a girls' school in Pekin. From here, I project India and Ceylon, a course of English in a Greek School, ending up in a college in Madrid."

Everybody over here, Julie reminded herself, had a separate and astonishing thing to do.

The rain had stopped when they set out to climb the hill to the Mess for dinner. There was one general military mess where most of the white colony ate, Miss Hope explained.

In the inky blackness Julie could form no impression of the town. There was the usual plaza inevitable to every Spanish town, on a plateau at the top of the hill. On a corner of the plaza loomed the large house of the august Commandant.

Dinner was almost over when they arrived. Here in this one room, closed against the elements like some Monte Cristo world, were nearly all the white inhabitants of the place. A hush fell as the newcomer stepped in among them.

In a community like this everybody was potential. The girl looked about her, stirred at the encounter with these beings who were to become the companions of her life; and when she was stirred the singular, characteristic inner gleam came out and lighted her features. These people, huddled together to keep their spirits alive in their neglected corner of the world, woke up as if they had received a message from their lost existence.

Major Landon, the Commandant, a tall, stern-look-

ing man of swarthy complexion, rose and greeted her, with the greatest possible courtesy, Julie thought. He was in fact kind to her at once. That this graciousness did not extend to every one, she soon learned. His deep utterance rolled around in his throat like a growl, and seldom got completely out. "You are the first American girl to visit Nahal," he rumbled. "We hope you'll stay!"

Miss Hope looked vexed, and resumed her introductions.

The Smiths were the only married couple. Theirs was a very recent and spectacular marriage — any reference to which seemed excessively to annoy the Major.

The two remaining members of the mess present were Lieutenants Dwight and Brentwood, members temporarily, since they had lost their cook; Bentwood, the Major's Adjutant, was a prosaically good-looking young man who certainly tried his best to please the Major by purring optimistically at him all the time, only to get snarled at for his pains.

The very slimmest lady with the very yellowest hair Julie had ever seen leaned across and whispered encouragingly: "Isn't he an ogre! I came here, a bride, six months ago, and he frightened me to death. I had come seven thousand miles to marry dear Marlborough — I hadn't seen him since he was thirteen years old — and you can imagine!"

"Luella," Mr. Smith called from the door.

"Some time I'll tell you what the monster said." The slim lady floated off.

Julie gave ear to Mr. Dwight on her left, whose attention had been so persistently straying from his food to her that the Major's basilisk eye had frequently

to recall it. Dwight explained to Julie in lowered tones — the Major was happily a little deaf — that the Commanding Officer was a somber old file, of belated rank and defeated hopes. Even his marriage had been a retarded affair — the lady had become middle-aged waiting for him to propose, when suddenly she had discovered that he had been making declarations to her for fifteen years, which, owing to his unintelligible utterance, she had never understood. Since the Major had been so deliberate in his own matrimonial concerns, he regarded with disfavor the precipitate nuptials of the Smiths.

The next morning when they again climbed the hill, Julie saw the village of Guindulman for the first time. Always thereafter it was set apart in her memory as a shining village set upon a bluff above the sea against an emerald tropical forest. Along its lone lines of snow-white beach, palms waved in solitude. Over to the east a very singular natural causeway united the island with a smaller one. To Julie there was something very aloof and strange about this causeway with the sea surging up on either side. The whole looked like Eden, new, green, and expectant.

Nahal was in insurrection. A great proportion of its native men had decamped for the hills, where under General Andegas they engaged in outlawry of every sort, seizing the property of peaceful natives and even killing them on the slightest suspicion that they were friendly to the Americans.

The Major was an old soldier, and for all his brusquerie a good one; but after a long sojourn in the subordinate grades he had lost youth's sublime capacity for hazard. He knew that if he should employ the measures essential to the pacification of the island, the

measures requisite for the obliteration of its chaos and disorder, he would end up as an oblation on the altar of American conscience. There might be others who could laugh in the teeth of the gods but the Major was too old. So, high up in his great open room, he could be seen by his world eternally walking about like a caged lion. There is no such bitter spectacle as that of a strong man knowing and yet fearing his own mind.

Around the plaza was all the history Guindulman had ever had. The church was very old, and was supposed to trace back to the activities of the Legasian missionaries. It had a three-storied stone tower, in which there yawned three gaps for missing bells carried off by Mohammedan pirates to their own terrible island — discernible on clear days as a sinister shadow against the sea. The façade of the church offered an entertaining exposition of the Book of Revelations. The several different kinds of Horned Beasts roared sulphurously from its brow, surreptitiously urged on from under the eaves by the Scarlet Woman; an incensed angel in the center with militant wings and drawn sword, gave them all battle, while under his feet a frightened saint hugged the arms of Spain in desperation.

Outside the door of the church stood a slim, black-robed figure, which, as the two women approached, turned upon them out of a somber and lonely face the sudden fire of a pair of piercing black eyes.

"Good morning, Padre," Miss Hope essayed deferentially. "May I present Miss Dreschell, who has come to take charge of the Boys' School?"

A change flashed through the priest's face, which was not suppressed before Julie had looked into a hidden chamber of his personality. The priest — he was

young and had all the swift movements of youth — looked at Julie quickly, and murmured a few Spanish words; then with an inclination of the head, he moved away. A crowd of children on their way to school came flocking about him.

Miss Hope said that he was a mestizo, the usual warring half-and-half — all restless souls vainly seeking, between two races, their destiny. James, the American teacher, who had visited him in his *convento*, said that Father Herrero knew both Greek and Latin, which in these parts was the same as saying that the Sultan of Jolo could speak French.

The Ayuntamiento, or government building, seemed in its huge concrete size to overtop the village. It held all the offices of the government, and streams of people were to be seen hurrying in and out.

In a wing of the building Julie saw a great upstairs gallery where two hammocks were hung. These were the quarters, Miss Hope thought, of the new Treasurer, the gentleman who had brought Julie ashore. Troops quartered downstairs made this building eminently safe. In a low-roofed building adjoining, prisoners stuck sociable faces out between iron bars.

The bachelor officers lived on the corner opposite the Major, the rest of the colony in intermediate houses. Thus the Major had his whole domain under his eyes, and could even see when those of the bachelors who messed separately across the plaza came to the table in their shirt-sleeves.

As Miss Hope and Julie walked down the road toward the side street where the two schools were located, the crowd of children who had been following the Padre detached themselves with the inevitable inconstancy of childhood, and formed a devoted train

around the teachers, offering them flowers. Julie, who was pretty and always popular with children, fell into possession of most of these.

The priest, left alone, frowned slightly in her direction. Before turning back into the church grounds he paused a moment at the gate, and Julie saw a portentous shadow cross his face.

"He's the most powerful man on the island," Miss Hope remarked. "The Padre, for that matter, always is. He is the mind of these people. Some of the officers accuse him of all sorts of things. It's hard to tell from his face what he is."

The boys' and the girls' schools stood opposite each other on a long, wide side street, over-shadowed by great tropical trees, in which the boys roosted out of hours among the mangoes and bananas. The buildings were high and roomy, overlooking charming scenery of jungle and sea, and were surrounded by the overgrown grounds that children love. This street was their retreat; they lived in it nearly all the time, played their games, mostly now those imported from America, and satisfied their hungry appetites with the queer cheap candies and little sponge cakes, made of very ancient eggs, that were purveyed in its stalls.

Julie turned into the Boys' School, now her responsibility, while Miss Hope crossed the street. Miss Hope, Julie learned, had several native teachers to help her; whereas one ex-soldier was the only assistant she had with over a hundred boys. Brown boys of every age and stature were filing past her up the stairs. The airy tropical structure rocked to its foundation under the onswEEPing surge of youth. Julie looked out at the golden morning, and her thoughts glowed. She felt equal to any enterprise in creation.

Mr. James was a well educated young man, who had come out to fight for his country; and who had stayed behind like others of his countrymen to experiment. He was not a regularly certificated teacher, but he was a good instructor and had been making remarkable progress with the older boys, with whom Julie could see he yearned to continue. The younger ones were not advancing, James confessed; his one ambitious idea having been to turn out candidates for scholarships in America.

Julie offered to take over the junior classes. Her sixty *aspirantes* filled every nook and corner of the room; sixty funny little brown creatures, fresh from their morning dip in the river, sitting like wet little birds in quivering expectancy. Julie glanced over the rows of brown heads: — the people that the Caravan in its long march had left behind. The boys put their heads down on the desks, like little setters, and stared. One hundred and twenty black beads peered up at her. She was beginning to be disconcerted, when a delightful little savage with hair standing up stiffly all over his head, like a circular brush, detached himself from the brown mass, and, moved by some aberrant impulse, strayed barefoot up to Julie's desk and irrelevantly laid upon it a rooster's long, bedraggled tail feather. Having consummated this act of tribute, Delphine, who was to become his teacher's undying friend, stole back.

Seized by an idea, Julie drew a picture of the feather on the board. The class sat up and inspected this feat. Having a knack with a pencil, she elaborated the feather into a rooster. A murmur of recognition and pure delight passed through the class. The bird on the board was a national idol. Unwittingly and quite by chance she had captured their interest.

In a few days they were chanting glibly of the rat and the cat and the permanently unpleasant relations between the two, soaking in learning by means of their incredible memories, and wrestling musically with the dark, mystic bars of the Star Spangled Banner and the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

James taught mathematics, and almost nothing else. He had a passion for numbers, which he taught dogmatically as the whole science of life. His boys had been shot dazedly through fractions, and were now halting awestruck before the heights of geometry. The fact and values of the universe astounded their unaccustomed minds. Their island had been their center of existence, and in this painful trepanning, their brains gaped before the marvels and terrors of higher human thought. These incipient philosophers, much perturbed, used to seek Julie out to ask her to explain a little the metaphysical net in which they found themselves fast. They were troubled terribly in their souls, and Julie, ignoring geometry, and all the equations of men, would seek with her fore-shortened philosophies to set these simple minds right; but she could see that they were not quite satisfied. There was no doubt about it that the boys, still unsettled in their minds, went to the priest, who received a very garbled version of her explanations.

Julie's own little boys were in their seats an hour before school opened, exhilarantly scratching their meager little life experiences on their slates, or debating with one another in bragging English. They loved the school, and lived in it in a state of expectant excitement. Like little charmed birds they sat, while Julie explained what became of the sun when it went away, and the wonderful journey they were at that

moment taking around it; whereupon the boys would feel their desks for the barest fractions of the movement of this celestial merry-go-round. They had an inordinate love of fairy tales, and listened — poor little earth-grubs — with widened eyes to the recounting of battles and heroes of far-away places of the world.

Julie never forgot those days. She could shut her eyes long afterwards and see the monsoon bowing the banana trees and scattering to the universe the golden host of the sacred tree of India, rushing with its wild force to up-root their little tropical world. The boys still sat in her memory in quivering wonder before the miracles of the cosmos. The archipelago could never again be the limit of their consciousness; it strayed now over the whole wide earth.

But it was hard work through hot long days for a boy and a girl, and the minds they were pulling out of savagery caught half-way. To pull them up to the tidal mark of civilization would take years, and it was just this staggering task that these two confronted. With their buoyant young shoulders heaving at the wheel, James would despairingly exclaim: "It can't be done. The whole race is stuck right here."

Julie would set her teeth. "But they've got to go through! The rest of humanity's done it. Remember they've had only a few hundred years, and look at the eons back of us!"

"But we sweated into our own souls, and they make us sweat for theirs. What were they doing in our eons of advancement? and who is fighting their savagery for them? We are!"

Julie sighed. "They are so eager, so anxious. I get frightened sometimes as I sit before them; they accept me so wholly as their creed. It comes over me

that twenty years from now sixty men will be thinking my thoughts. Oh, we'll get them, sometime — and isn't it the most splendid work anybody could engage in? To make a race! Why, you and I are sowing the dragon's teeth, which shall spring up as the generation of light."

CHAPTER VI

JULIE now entered into a phase of existence that she had never before experienced. She was important to quite an extensive number of people, not in the school alone — that was a life apart — but in the delightful world into which she had dropped. A young, trusting, and joyous figure, she stirred Nahal. Even the Major, when she came within his range, emerged from his Hamlet gloom and persuaded his facial muscles into a grim smile. To all the others Nahal was exile; to Julie among so many eagerly attentive people, a number of them men and young, who made a queen of her, Nahal was life translated to some glorious star. Her work seethed in her soul and kept her vivid; all those keen brown boys who were to grow up some day were her star dust, out of which she was to create worlds.

Life is the present, the philosophers have said. To the young men Julie was the eternal feminine, while the magic of their youth stirred hers. She was utterly unused to so much concentrated attention. The earth was abundantly peopled with a kind race. She and her followers spent the evenings on the Calcedos' balcony, in the midst of an assortment of banjoes, rocking in native hammocks and keeping the night alive. Nothing at all went to sleep, not even the birds irritatedly rustling among the leaves, nor the fireflies, nor the timid Ghecko, who too horrible to be seen by day, crept out of his mysterious retreat and offered his harsh bass voice at very close range; nor Mike the Major's

monkey, across the road at Head-quarters, where he squealed and begged abjectly to be let into the fun; nor the natives drifting in their little boats out on the silver water, with their guitars throbbing softly through the moonlight. Here they swung and strummed, and defied the stars, and wondered — what after Nahal? though into this speculation Julie never entered. She was unqualifiedly satisfied with Nahal. It was a beautiful island, it was paradise, and in it a great many remarkable things were to come to pass.

When she arose in the morning and drew into her nostrils the perfume of the hills, when she came out into that early sunlight that seemed to promise immortal things, when she had a real look into that mysterious womb of nature, the jungle, she was electrified. Everywhere there was so much light; it whetted the desire of living into a passion.

Thus Julie came into closer touch with native life. It revealed itself more fully to her than to the rest of the colony. Through the schools she saw just a little into the native's heart, the heart of an imperfectly civilized child. She was also by her zeal and indefatigable young strength impelled to go into the night-school work. James had been struggling along with it alone. As she came in out of the darkness, and gazed at that assemblage for the first time, her throat went dry. Seventy-five of them huddled into a room that had been built to accommodate half that number, men and women crowded everywhere and lining the walls! There was something terrible about such an assemblage, something that gripped the heart in a vise; for almost none of them were young, many of them in fact were grizzled and trembling into old age. Their hands were gnarled with hard work, their faces blackened by

the sun. Most of them were so poor that a copper spelled existence; yet strangely, incomprehensibly, with some blind hope in their darkened brains, they were here, and, with the stupor of half-civilized drudges, were lifting up their eyes to the emissary before them in fearful, blind appeal.

Julie put her hand over her eyes. "They are looking at me as if I were God," she thought to herself.

Often when the session was over, James and Julie refrained from meeting each other's discouraged eyes. All day and then at night, they had struggled with all their young strength to drag a people over a margin. Never-to-be-forgotten nights were those, with the dim lamp flickering above the long rows of benches, and the dark trance of souls groping blindly for the light. They were struggling against forces of the universe that would not be impelled.

"It's no use!" James hopelessly declared one night. "They are too old. You can only get at the young shoot."

"It can't be too late, as long as they aspire," Julie exclaimed, the tears springing to her eyes. "Think! — after plowing all day in the river bottoms, in mud up to their waists, they come here in the few hours their poor souls own. It means something, I say. It's a poor, twisted fragment of the thing that wrested Mind out of the Universe!"

"I've only one life to live," James declared, closing his books, "and no more, Miss Dreschell, have you!"

"If only we could see it through!" Julie sighed.

She looked at the stars, as she walked home. Big shining worlds rolling through space carrying the problem of Mind on into infinity. Such a far journey man had yet to make. Isabel had told her to go out and

hold up the world. She was finding it glorious business.

Julie came out of the night with the star-light still in her eyes. There was something stirring about her rapt, young presence, as she ascended the stairs to the sala, that quickened the attention of a tall young man who was rather hesitatingly awaiting her.

The young man stood in full view, and her attention was immediately attracted to his dignity of height and his direct gaze. She liked his indomitable head, with its rigidly youthful contour and surmounted by its upright crest of hair that glittered under the hanging lamp like metal. She decided that what was so striking about him was his superlatively untarnished look.

He introduced himself as Lieutenant Calmiden. Julie understood then that he was the Post Quartermaster, who had been absent, in Solano, for supplies.

They talked about Nahal, and he told her how much he loathed it, and all other conceivable islands of the seas.

"I've been wondering what you could have been thinking about as you came up the stairs," he said. "You came in scattering light about you."

"Oh, I am only a glow-worm, who's apt to lose his little torch any minute, however much I may wish to be an archangel of light."

"Angels are finished with experience; they are men who have been sublimated to cold perfection. Don't you wish to *live*, to experience, for yourself?" the young man demanded with intensity. Julie felt rather unaccountably impelled to say that she did.

"I used to live in this house, myself," he declared. "It was bachelor quarters till the Calcedos teased it back. There is a wonderful view from the balcony;

I used to sit and look at it by the hour. Come, and let me show it to you."

They strolled out to the gallery. Calmiden pointed to the causeway, a narrow strip of glistening land, looking in the moonlight like a bridge flung between two worlds, with solid silver masses of water on either side.

"What a strange roadway!" Julie said. "What is at the other end?"

"I don't know. Nobody ever goes over there. There is a mass of legends about the causeway; one that in a great cholera plague, the angels walking about the earth, lifted it out of the water in order to go across. I imagine the volcano to the south — whose red glow you can see on clear nights, against the sky, as if the sea were on fire — had something to do with its origin. I love it — I feel as if it were to have something to do with my fate."

"These are such strange nights," Julie reflected. "They are too dramatic for sleeping; the universe comes out from behind its curtain; they are nights for walking the causeway alone with one's soul."

The young man's straight gaze swerved quickly to her. Julie had on a green gown, and the green bracelet, which rested on the railing of the gallery. Of all the lovely shining things of the night, the young man appeared to have decided, she was the loveliest, and the most charming.

"Do you wear that," — he gestured toward the jade circle — "because of your eyes?"

"I wear it because somebody gave it to me."

"Somebody!" the young man ejaculated in forcible disappointment.

"A very beautiful woman in Manila, who had a

tiny temple with a Green God in it — a pitiless little Green God — presented it to me as a gift from him. I met such strange vivid people up there. They called the woman who gave me the bracelet the Empress of the East. There were others — too," she paused, struck silent by a recollection. "How I should have loved," she continued, "to stay there! Evidently it was meant that I should miss wonderful adventures. I can only be a glow-worm on Nahal."

"There is something about you that suggests that you are to travel far. Oh, I hope not, Miss Dreschell. Don't go any farther. Nahal might become something remarkable."

As he said good night, and held her hand in his, Julie's thoughts took a sudden unintelligible turn, as if they were never again to follow the old course.

CHAPTER VII

WHILE Julie was dealing, in a splendid glow, with the affairs of the universe, her own mundane concerns, she was uneasily aware, were urgently in need of attention. She retired one night to her room, with the jungle closing up about it, and the jungle's wild creatures rustling but a few feet away, to do some deep worldly thinking. From her trunk she took the book in which she fitfully kept accounts, and calculated furiously for some time, going over the inexorable figures.

Suddenly she dropped the pencil, and sank back in her chair, staring somberly into the night. Its blackness swept up to the grated bars of the windows, and peered in at the solitary, harassed figure in the cell.

Not one dollar of the hundreds she owed Mrs. Morris had been paid back. That very first, sacred responsibility her new life had assumed! In Manila, money had unconsciously spent itself. Then, there had been the expenses of the trip South. But bitterest fact of all, the splendid wardrobe, the cause of all this trouble, had bit by bit, impalpably and detestably, as if under an evil incantation, been giving way. Dresses cracked explosively, at the touch, and silk stockings, however prayerfully drawn on, disintegrated into an elemental snarl of thread. What the elements did not demolish, the cockroaches, nearly as big as mice and scrambling deftly all over the room, voraciously devoured.

Julie sat and burned with dishonor over her affairs.

She felt as abased as if she had become the actual chattel of her far-away creditor. She would have resorted to any expediency to keep this bondage from being made public. The Dreschells had an unconscionable pride. Mr. Dreschell had brought up his family on the theory that borrowing money was only a shade less reprehensible than stealing it. This obligation was the Debt of England to Julie's soul. With her small salary, how, she pondered, was it to be worked out?

She had in her trunk one month's salary. Every bit should go to the woman whose *peon* she had become. In forgetting her own further necessity to exist, she was acting with characteristic feminine recklessness. There being no post-office at Guindulman, Julie rolled up the bills neatly, put them in an envelope, and addressed it to Mrs. Morris. Thereupon her mental processes took quite a leap. She arose with a shade even of self-satisfaction. It was splendid to be an independent integer of the world — to handle your own destiny — to say nothing of your own money — unafraid.

Into the midst of these cogitations came the Calcedos' *muchacho*, to announce a young man.

"What young man?" Julie demanded particularly.

"*El Teserero!*" the *muchacho* declared.

Julie dropped back flatly in her seat. Since the uncomfortable and startling moments on the boat, she had contrived never to meet the Treasurer alone. She knew how dissatisfied with this he had been, and that in the midst of his activities planned to supersede the Governor in power, he had been lying in wait for his opportunity. She could see no way out of the encounter, and fortified herself for it as she ascended the stairs to the sala.

The Treasurer held her hand an instant and regarded her closely with his odd light eyes. The surprisingly sun-burnt face wore a look that sobered her. She indicated a chair.

Mr. Purcell demurred. "Let's go out on the balcony," he suggested, regarding with disapproval the publicity of their surroundings.

"Oh, I think I should rather remain here," she replied lightly.

"You don't object to going out there with the others," he reproached.

"There are several of them," Julie explained.

"How about Calmiden, and — others," he probed with jealous meaning.

Julie started slightly. How had he managed to be so well informed concerning her movements?

"Why do you avoid me?" he demanded. "Do you think all these men are your friends? Wait and find out. Now, I am serious. I care for you truly, as I told you on the boat. I asked you to marry me; and I mean it still — in spite of your evasions."

"Please don't!" Julie begged. "You couldn't possibly have meant it — after those few hours."

She recalled her refusal — so adroit and impersonal, in which her altruistic aspirations and her inviolate determination not to marry had been calculated to carry conviction. She had wanted to regard the matter as settled, yet here he was more determinedly possessive than ever.

"You did not dream that I had given up?" he demanded.

"I beg of you to do so! I refuse utterly!"

"Don't say anything you'll be sorry for later," he broke in. "Things are all your way now, but wait

till they turn — till you find out none of those fellows mean anything, and the bottom falls out of your air-castle. Then you won't say that."

Julie stared at him in resentful amazement. "Mr. Purcell," she exclaimed, "I don't understand this conversation. You don't at all love me. You have merely set your will upon me, and are trying to frighten me. Please never reopen this subject." She rose. "It is, so far as I am concerned, definitely and completely closed."

"You'll regret that!" he exclaimed agitatedly.

"Have you threatened me enough?" Julie was frantically angry now.

She was aghast at the purpose that gathered in his face as he replied: "I do not wish to threaten you, but I have not given up."

He descended the staircase, leaving Julie with her breast heaving.

That wretched voyage! Had men gone mad in this queer land, that they would ask a girl to marry them on a day's acquaintance, and to this staggering casualness add the brigand intention to seize her if she refused? According to this doggedly unpleasant young man, he had put a mortgage upon her that he meant at some time to exact. How many more people were to advance claims on her life?

To rid her mind of this uncomfortable visitor she turned, on going downstairs, in the direction of Miss Hope's room. The cheerful light shed through the partly open door drew her forward. As she climbed the three steps that lifted the room from the ground, she caught a glimpse of Mr. Brentwood's white starched back. She started to retreat, but the young

man, turning quickly at the sound of her footsteps, caught sight of her.

"Why are you always out when I come to see you?" he reproached, smiling with his white teeth through his carefully brushed mustache. "I tried to call on you to-night."

"I wasn't out," Julie moodily replied, remembering how much she had wished to be. "I was upstairs."

Mr. Brentwood directed upon Miss Hope a peculiar look. "Come in!" he hospitably insisted. "I can still see you."

Julie's evil star beckoned her on. Miss Hope offered no remark as she took a chair. Mr. Brentwood, promptly facing around to Julie, proceeded to direct toward her the fullest extent of his charms, and succeeded for once in being truly entertaining. Julie, eager to forget her experience with Purcell, dropped gladly into a sprightly discourse, and both of them forgot utterly the rigid figure of the vestal virgin, which opposite them began to steam with wrath.

After they had laughed together for some time, Mr. Brentwood bade Julie a lingering good-night, calling back a careless adieu to the shape in the background.

Julie turned to Miss Hope, but stopped short before the spectacle of that lady who, having come out of the shadows, was positively trembling with inconjectural passion. Her indefinite features seemed to melt into a boiling lava, which strangely her face appeared to be. Her blue eyes vehemently shot flames. Julie watched, with interested daring, the forthcoming eruption.

"Miss Dreschell," cried Miss Hope, bursting with

wrath, "you will seek quarters elsewhere. Do you suppose it is entertaining for me to sit here all evening while you monopolize my friends! Mr. Brentwood was my friend, Miss Dreschell,"—in rising crescendo—"until you came. My room and the Calcedos' sala have other purposes than the accommodation of the crowd of young men with which you seem to find it necessary to surround yourself. Moreover, natives of the better class have a sense of propriety, and it is not edifying to them to watch your friends—and their caresses."

Julie stared incredulously. Then a realization of what Miss Hope must mean flashed through her. Evidently she had seen in the dusk under her window the wind-up of a gay tender little adventure with Terry O'Brien before he returned to command his mountain fastness at Tarlac. It was never, Julie knew, to come to anything, and had involved only a shadowy caress.

"But the Calcedos haven't said anything of the kind!" Julie objected with rising anger.

"They will say so. They have some cousins coming to visit them," Miss Hope declared, pointing positively in the direction of the door. She closed it sharply on Julie's outraged back, leaving the girl to grope her way through the dark. Julie got to the entrance, and stood there staring indignantly into the night.

It was a charming night, all the worlds of the universe spinning gayly up above her through the light of myriads of suns. It must be really a very small concern to Uranus or to Neptune, where a hundred years are as one, whether the atom called Miss Hope or the atom called Purcell were angry or not. As for the atom called Julie dancing headlong through space—

was it even remotely possible that somewhere, some place, any one atom tremendously counted? Was there a law that held over those great worlds and their activities? And must one conform to it? But how, with mystery on every side, were you to find the law? Had she, because Purcell was not so pleasing as the others, been intolerant of him? She had not been angry at the sentimental intimations of the others. She had, in fact, poetically enjoyed them. And Miss Hope — although she was, according to Julie, terribly old, might she not still cling through a thousand yearning desires to the magic garment of youth?

Julie was not sure concerning all these speculations. A strange consciousness seemed to be speaking through her, a consciousness that saw things from all angles, but which only occasionally broke into utterance.

The approach of a tall, familiar figure put a stop to this metaphysical trend of thought.

"I came once before," Calmiden announced; "but I heard you in there with Miss Hope, so I decided to come back later. Come take a walk as far as the steps of the *convento*."

"It's getting late," Julie demurred.

"What does it matter? Look at the night!"

Julie regarded it, and capitulated. They strolled up the road that led to the upper part of the village. Street lights were sparse and dim in Guindulman. The avenue was almost closed overhead by the prodigal foliage of mango trees, and blackened with the soft, thick darkness of the tropics; yet to-night it was meteorically lighted by myriads of fire-flies shimmering in the branches.

Julie threw up her head in wonder at the transfiguration. Everything had become unreal. The avenue

was like a road in fairy-land. The *convento*, white as driven snow in the moonlight, rose from its high tier of steps above them, like an ancient temple.

To the left was the Major's ogre-like retreat. Mike, routed from his roost in the trees by this intolerable illumination, was snarling and lashing through the branches like an imp of darkness.

This little gargoyle had been deliberately installed in this tree commanding the entrance to his office by the Major, and Hell itself could not have been more ferociously guarded by Cerberus. Men could come and men could go; but to the whole female race Mike stuck out his whiskered jaw in challenge. He might be swinging by his tail, ever so happy and carefree, in the branches, but let a daughter of Eve, however secretly, steal up to the portal of the omnipotent Major, and he was down upon her with a thud, wildly rending her garments.

"Wild little beast!" Julie disapprovingly declared, moving out of range of his chain. The monkey, like some monster of elf-land, thrust his grotesque little head out of a nimbus of fire-flies. He scratched them out of his eyes, and securing them cunningly in his wicked little paws, bolted them with rapt relish.

"Horrible!" Julie cried. "And they were lighting up the world!"

"He's rather handy to have round, though," Calmiden hardily declared. "You see I am Quarter-master, and people want to bother one with such a multitude of senseless things."

They mounted the terraced steps, which in a sheer drop fell from the walls of the *convento*. "Look!" Julie pointed high above them. On the aerial gallery

of the *convento*, a black cassock loomed stark against the night, a solitary brooding figure staring at the stars. Once it bent intently to regard the two young persons.

"Poor fellow!" Calmiden exclaimed.

"Why?" At sight of the priest a cloud had come over Julie's mood.

"He's so solitary, by race and vocation. He's only half white, and only half a man. He might as well be a magus up there in his tower, for all the participation he has in human living. Wouldn't you be lonely if the gates of your soul's territory were closed against you, if you were forbidden to love—ever? He has fire in his eyes, our padre. He wasn't made to tend altars on high mountains."

"It's my firm conviction," Julie declared, "that he tends very assiduously the fires of the insurrection. He hates us; he hates all white men."

"Because we are what but for a little slip of fate he might have been. The tragedy, the wickedness of these racial Lucifers flung down to a lower world!"

"Do you know," Julie said soberly, looking up at the Priest's tower, "I fancy the padre doesn't like me. These people don't understand our women—the woman who walks through the world alone. To them she is an object of suspicion; to their mind her liberty signifies licence. For instance, to-night I oughtn't to be here—and he's looking down on me."

"What does it matter what they think? So far as I am concerned they don't exist. I am just serving my time,"—he closed his lips tightly; "counting the moments till I can get out and go home."

A brooding distant look came into the girl's eyes.

"To pass in and pass out? What good can that do? One should put the plow into the soil and not abandon it."

"I should think you'd want to get clear of the uncleanness of this territory of Baal. I've seen enough raw, bestial nature over here to make my soul revolt. The standards civilization has fought for go by the board here. One must be forever on the lookout in the heart of half savage society to keep from relapsing."

"Just you wait till my boys grow up. Then there'll come a change."

"Good God! You don't purpose staying over here till then?"

The girl looked steadily into the night. "If I did the right thing I'd stay. My little brown men lifted into the citizenship of the world!" she murmured.

"Come down from your perch in the skies. What a dreamer you are — and what a life to fling carelessly away! It belongs to somebody or other."

"Nobody gives up anything anymore," Julie went on. "The renunciation that built up the world is going out of it. Upon whose shoulders, if not upon ours, is the foundation of the New World to rest? Isabel called me Atlas, and I have been so happy holding up my little end."

"It is terrible to speak of spending the years of your life here. You don't at all know what you are talking about. You don't know orientals. Wait till you see China, a half dead amoeba sprawling over the earth. You will be overwhelmed by the spectacle of humanity getting nowhere at all — just crawling along the surface of the globe, like worms. Some day you will wrest yourself out from these sunken millions in

fearful prayer to get back to your own kind. Oh, don't you feel the darkness, the despair of it? There will never be any renaissance of the East — for to have a renaissance you must have a soul."

"But we are trying to make the start here — that the fire may travel."

"Among these inconsequential little swaggerers? Even China, with her art and her senile one-man kind of learning, has them beaten miles. My soul is sick of the whole debased East, I tell you; and I despise this beastly hot-house of an archipelago that spawns existence in such hideous profusion. I am no colonist, no pioneer, ever. I am just a soldier, to restore order and pass on."

"And you don't care at all about the great struggle that is commencing, everywhere over here? Ah, I can feel it," she cried, "— the powers of Light against the powers of Darkness!"

Calmiden regarded her with profound feeling. "You are terribly young to be here alone."

"And already I have made two enemies," she said with a change of mood. "The very first of my life!" she reflected ruefully.

He knitted his brows. "I don't like to think of your having enemies in this country."

"They sprang up like a simoon in the desert. I was angry for a bit, but I can't nurse a real good hatred in my soul for five minutes. It just peters out, and of course that puts me at a frightful disadvantage."

A swift change came over the young man's face, an inflexible sheath changing it into a mask of steel. "I can stay angry forever," he said, frowning into the night. "I don't mean that I have merely a bad temper. My mind simply will not expurgate an affront. I love

and I hate for good," he declared with concentrated passion.

Julie drew away a little.

"Oh, but why dwell on such things, you and I?" he went on. "All this would not have come out if you had not stirred to the bottom, where the truth dwells. I may be violent underneath, and hard with those who injure me, but there are any number of things to which I am inflexibly true. I am as inexorable one way as the other. I despise weakness of all kinds, and it is weak to let people hurt you. I don't care what anybody says, if you let a person hurt you he will despise you into the bargain. It's too bad, but I can't be changed — and I'm glad somehow that I made a clean breast of it to you."

"You frighten me a little by the order that is all through you. Even your sins appear to have unity, whereas I keep house topsy-turvily in my innermost being. I have nothing filed there. I don't know what will flash out at any moment. I am camping in the universe — and having for the present a tremendous time. Some policeman will come along some time and take me in because I haven't built a house in creation. But just now there is adventure, and the glory of being alive under the tents of Kedar."

She smiled up at the moon. "I wonder where I am heading?" she exclaimed. Her glance dropped, she stopped talking, and her face lit up softly; her attention claimed by something she seemed to see off in dusky space. Calmiden watched her for some moments where she stood on the step of the old convent with the moonlight flowing over her like a timeless river.

"What are you seeing off there?" he asked.

"Faces! Faces — startling ones that I saw in Manila — made by the New World. I often think and wonder about them — about one, more often!"

"A man's!" Calmiden echoed blankly.

"A god's — with the heart of all the world beating in his breast."

"And you think about him!" he exclaimed in gloomy dissatisfaction.

The girl roused herself. "It was only the encounter of an instant," she mused wistfully. "It would be very foolish to think of just one moment out of one's life, would it not?"

She turned suddenly, for the thought had surged over her again that she had not in any way heard from Manila since she had left it behind — that in the busy, brilliant lives into which she had fluttered for an instant she was not even a recollection. Apparently in these strenuous times it was every man to his own road! She had chosen her road — but she had never ceased to remember those beautiful days and nights.

"Good night," she told the young man. "I must go now."

Before she went to bed, she put out her light and, wrapped in the thick darkness, stared out on the swaying groves. Far down the avenues her gaze pierced, as if some message were stirring toward her from off there. Soon she was asleep, close to the evil, perfumed earth.

As Julie went pondering along the golden dust-powdered road, she was confronted at the convent steps by Anna Anastasia, the Priest's mother, who accosted her with the freedom of manner that was part of her efflorescent personality.

Once long ago Anna Anastasia had been pretty

enough to ensnare the attention of a rich young Spanish official. The Priest was the issue of their irregular alliance, and against its consequences his soul perpetually rebelled. This light, fluid creature had inexorably fixed his fate. The desires of her soft little body had made him what he must unchangeably remain. Far from being a Magdalene, however, Anna Anastasia, as the mother of the Priest, occupied in this elastic human community a position of almost religious eminence.

Nodding sociably at the girl, she said in Spanish: "I've been told you seek accommodations."

Julie looked harassed. Had she not been everywhere unsuccessfully over this crowded town and finally been advised amazingly by the Governor to marry the Teserero in order to put an end to her troubles?

"It's maddening," she replied, pushing her damp blond hair from her brow, "but there seems to be none to be had!"

The Señora smiled archly. "Quite true; there are none. It seems a shame that so young and so charming a señorita should be distressed. I am lonely!" she exclaimed. "It is not,"—she shrugged her shoulders—"the pleasantest living in the world with Raoul. If he could become more human—if he would find something to take his black thoughts off himself, and off me! Would you believe it, Señorita, he keeps me a close prisoner—me who am but thirty-eight? Many women marry, and have lovers still, very suitably, at my age. Always he makes life hell by demanding, 'Why did you do it?' Why indeed! It would be well for him to see that it is not easy to resist. His father was a cavalier. You can see it

in Raoul, who is so tall and strong and beautiful, as you are. Raoul is of a higher race.

"Come to live with me in the *convento*, and I will give you every comfort. Things must be made easier for me, *Señorita*; truly they must. I should love Raoul to go through purgatory—to learn that outside his breviary there is a heaven and a hell."

Julie stood turning color under a mixture of violent emotions. This impossible and monstrously unconcerned woman actually expected an answer to her unthinkable proposal. But even in the midst of suffocating emotions, Julie remembered that she must be careful of giving offense to so powerful a person. "It is inconceivable!" she exclaimed, drawing away.

"But why, *Señorita*? You like men. There are always many around you. It was so too with me. Make Raoul eat the dust!" Her face set into passionate lines of hatred.

Julie stared dumfounded at the woman who claimed her as a sister spirit. "This is horrible," she breathed.

"My son says you are beautiful, but that you are evil. The other *señorita*, he says, is too old for sin. You see that he is very harsh."

Julie was trembling now. "*Señora*," she said, "it is too much." She hurried back to her jungle room, clenching her hands, and letting the angry tears flow.

That afternoon, Maria Tectos, the Old Maid of Guindulman, one of the most noteworthy personages of the village, not only as the possessor of considerable wealth but as the acknowledged leader among the women, hailed Julie as the girl trudged by. She offered Julie a room in her large house, which was the best and most unique mansion in the town.

It was distinctly a compliment, Julie understood, to be invited to join this exclusive household. The Old Maid had been to a school in Manila; moreover, with her ultra-modern, tremendous, iron-gray pompadour shaking always like a tower with her laughter, she would be a jolly companion. She believed, so she was always averring to Julie, in the complete freedom of her sex; and she was constantly stirring the women up to one thing or another; but this feminist progressiveness unfortunately carried along with it the conservatism of old age. The exactions the Old Maid imposed would leave Julie none of that liberty the Old Maid extolled. Julie could see her young men friends only under the Old Maid's eye; and it became clear that everything would be done to discourage altogether their foolish visits. The Old Maid pointed out her own successful single, elderly state as a contrast to that of her companions.

After the sinister proposition of the morning, and the accompanying insinuations, the Old Maid's invitation seemed a real elucidation of her problem. The view of her entertained by Anna Anastasia and the priest was peculiar to their own dark minds. The others knew that she had come here to give all she could. But it was troublesome that their appreciation of conventions so disproportionately exceeded their realization of ethics. These people whose Atlas she had come to be, might not at all understand her living alone, as she had been thinking of doing, in a little house which she had discovered she could rent. Perhaps, after all, since she had made this her particular task, and was getting really to have quite a hold on some of the people, she had better accept the Old Maid's stringent proffer. So with a strange feeling

that this decision would be ultimately critical, she told the Old Maid that she would come.

When she returned from school at five o'clock, Calmiden stood waiting outside the closed Headquarters.

"You're late," he exclaimed, coming toward her. "I've been waiting some time."

Julie regarded him gravely. "I'm tired," she said. "Finding a roof for one's head is harder than I thought it was. You know that Miss Hope has made the Calcedos put me out. I've been everywhere, and had the strangest things said to me—" She paused gloomily. "But I've succeeded at last."

"Where are you going?" he demanded quickly.

"To Maria Tectos. She has offered to take me in. She is very powerful, and I shall be very comfortable, but —"

"What?"

"She has made stipulations. She does not approve of my seeing men alone, or walking out with them."

"Well, you told her you wouldn't go to her, of course."

"I told her I would."

Calmiden stopped short with a forcible exclamation. "Why, she will never let us see each other! I say, you are not going to let that happen? Do you want to give up life completely, sit up alone night after night in the dusk among the palms in this desolate bit of jungle? You don't know what it is, I tell you — this dark alien land. Every atom of it makes you feel your abandonment. This country's not for women anyway. It's for armed marching men. I can't think how you dropped into it. How did you?"

Julie started. "I think — somebody said something to me once on a roof top."

"Well, I am talking to you now from the ground floor. Life is short enough anyway, and you propose to cut off all its possibilities by burying yourself in the wilderness even more effectually than you have done already. Why it's insulting the high gods who made you the lovely being you are. Maria Tectos — and all the natives be dashed when they try to dictate your mode of living!"

Julie stood looking soberly down into the dust of the sun-burnt road. The life of a hermit on the island of Nahal! Could one even for the most inexorable principles endure it?

"It's beginning to get awfully hard!" She sighed. "Sometimes I long so to go back to Manila — I really had no idea of being so completely put out of the world. I thought I should work very hard, and win my certificate to title among the Builders. There appeared to be very little real work left for me in Manila — and it didn't seem fair to play safe over courses already won. But I really didn't expect to be so cut adrift."

She straightened up, and smiled.

CHAPTER VIII

CALMIDEN pressed closer. "We couldn't walk in the dusk, ever any more, Julie, among the mango trees, with the fire-flies all about us, or sit on the wharf and watch the little boats."

Julie's gaze dropped again in heavy thought. Calmiden was looking at her closely.

"What lovely hair you have! Oh! do be kind to yourself, and to all the rest of us."

She lifted her head. "Why, anyway, should it make any difference in the long run what I do about it?" she demanded of the universe.

"Then you won't go?" Calmiden exclaimed joyously.

Still Julie hesitated. But the instincts of youth and the joy of living had won the struggle in her breast.

"No," she agreed.

When Julie went to the mess that evening, she found the Major scowling heavily at the table cloth. He announced at last: "I've just received an order from the Department which revokes commissary privileges for civilians. This will of course deprive them of the privilege of Army messes. I seldom make any comment upon my orders, but right now this appears to be particularly unfortunate. We are a remote and inaccessible unit of society, facing the roughest conditions; and now some of us are about to be completely cut loose. Supplies will have to be procured in Solano, from Shylocks who exact excessive prices. They must

be requisitioned at once, but until they arrive, I shall, on my own responsibility, keep this mess open."

He looked at Julie as he spoke. From the first, he had made her his special charge. The girl was aghast. For the purchase of large supplies she had no money, having despatched it all to her creditor across the ocean. She left the room heavily, and groped her way down the road. There were no fire-flies to light the world to-night.

Suddenly some one stepped out from among the trees and softly spoke her name. He made a quick sign for silence, and she suppressed the incredulous cry that had sprung to her lips.

It was Adams, dropped down from the skies; for how else, with Dao on the other side of the island, could he have gotten here?

"My hour came, and I bolted!" he said. "I've ridden without sleep two days through a wilderness. The ogre wouldn't let me have a leave; but I persuaded him to give me a three-day hunting pass to go after deer in the mountains. Don't know how I ever got through; and if the Major should find it out — or any of them — I'd be court-martialled and chucked. There seems to be a path in this grove, which we can follow to get out of the way of observation. I came, of course, to talk to you."

The path ran not far from the Old Maid's house, into the copse. It brought them upon the deserted end of an estate, where a small house could be seen deeply sheltered in the trees.

"That's a nice place — sort of a wild garden."

They settled themselves upon a log. The moon coming out from behind clouds broke only fitfully into these woodland depths. All around them was the

soft still dusk, and a mysterious pensiveness in the night.

"I had to come," Adams declared. "I wanted to see human beings, I wanted to talk to you. There's an appetite of the spirit that has to be satisfied. I haven't had any dinner, nor what you might call any lunch, but I don't care. I've run amuck to get here. I couldn't stand living with the lower man any longer. Doc's gone, and there were just the ogre and myself!" He rested his elbows on his knees, and dropped his head heavily in his hands. "The men are sick and going down. The falling white man drops till there is nothing white about him but his skin! I won't be that. I won't go down with the rest! Oh, I've a right to live!

"I fled over the mountains, I would have gone through blood for this instant's reunion with the decencies of my kind. To-night with my hat pulled over my eyes, I walked into the post when it was getting dark. I left my horse outside the village, and as I passed every house, I looked into it like a ghost. What a jolly little group! The Major was in his window, his iron old face turned to the hills, planning, I'll bet, red-hot campaigns that would put his honor at rest. Good, decent old fellow, dressed in his stiff white. You ought to see how we go to dinner in Dao — or rather, you shouldn't.

"There was old Bent, sewing on a button by the light of a lamp, and Dwight, a few feet away, reading a paper in a hammock, with Mike sitting on his head. Calmiden was out on the back gallery, with his feet wound round his tilted chair, staring at the sunset or the island, or something over there.

"Three of the fellows all together. I used to make

the fourth. We used to play cards, and read our letters out loud.

"Little Mrs. Smith, farther on, was bending over a photograph in the dusk — that one of Marlborough taken in Cuba, I suppose. It made me wish I'd had a romance.

"You are about the only girl I ever thought about. But think how long it will be before I see you again! And then there are all these men here —"

Time passed unnoticed by the two sitting on the log amid the silvery lights and shadows, reviewing the experiences of youth and confiding to each other its ideals. Those hours were printed forever on Julie's memory. Long afterwards she could recall Adams as he had sat with the moonlight playing about the shadow of his figure and his pondering gaze bent upon the encroaching darkness, and the way he had said, throwing out his arms, "Every time I stretch out my hand — it seems to come up against an invisible wall!"

"Who's that?" he exclaimed suddenly.

A man in white was coming out of the house. He opened the gate in front of them.

Julie hesitated. She had identified the secret residence.

"It is the house of Nemecia Victoria," she replied.

"The village Thais! That was an American. No native is so tall."

He rose soberly. "I must go back and sit on the lid of my little hell. I'm all right now. I went wild, and have done a mad thing, but it has set me right."

They strolled along close to the fence that cut the woods off from the public road. They stopped at the delapidated gate. He took her hands in his. "Dear, little, unforgettable friend of a few hours! We have

both to stick to our outposts now, but these times can't last forever. Till better days then, and don't let me pass out of your thoughts! Good-by!" He bent down and kissed her on the cheek.

Then he struck off at once into the darkness of the thicket. Julie watched motionlessly at the gate till the shadowy form disappeared. She had been groping around in darkness for a hand, and suddenly, out of another's extremity, one had come to meet her own. Adams and she had both deeply become involved in a great struggle. They had both, the girl subconsciously felt, been elected to the destiny of the East. Between them there was a cemented bond. By himself "holding out," he had helped her across the ditch.

A sound close at hand caused her to look around quickly. The figure of a man in white was turning down a side street, not a few yards away. Julie recognized it as the same figure that she and Adams had seen emerge from Nemecia Victoria's house.

CHAPTER IX

A FEW days later, the Major, who had sat throughout his dinner in gloomy silence, said: "I've had a telegram from Templeton. He says Adams left Dao five days ago on a three-day hunting pass, and he hasn't returned. He says Adams has had it in his head all along to visit Guindulman, and he is sure now that he must have tried to get across, a mad man's undertaking! And of course he didn't make it, or we should have heard from him. Brentwood," blaming the Adjutant, as he always did when he was disturbed, "why hadn't Adams been transferred?"

"I can't recall your saying anything about it, sir," Brentwood pacifically replied.

"If he tried to come here there's a reason for his being so long on the way, and he'll be court-martialled for his pains. Even with a map this wilderness is hard to wade through. But if he actually went hunting, he has met with foul play. Hunting in this country alone! What judgment Templeton ever had is dissolved in whiskey, and Adams has gone stark mad."

"Adams has been in Dao for nearly two years, seeing only an occasional Spanish launch captain, and a dipsomaniac," Mrs. Smith remarked.

The Major was too deeply worried to challenge this. "We have no way of knowing what he did do. I have telegraphed O'Brien to take out some men."

Julie who had sat listening, with staring eyes and a fevered face, gazed in fright at the Major. Adams

had enjoined absolute secrecy concerning his dash in and out of Guindulman. If she were to disclose his adventure, she would expose him to military trial. If she did not — She gazed round the anxiety-weighted table, and tried with palpitating heart to come to a decision.

After dinner, walking agonizedly down the hill, she tried again to think what to do. Adams had said it might take him two or three days to get back. If he should arrive back, safely, it might appear that he had been lost on his deer hunt; how could she dare to subject him to court-martial? How, on the other hand, could she dare risk his life by another hour's loss of time in telling what she knew? His safety came first of all.

She retraced her way, and knocked timidly at the Major's door.

He opened it himself, looking at her rather strangely, she thought.

"I want to speak to you, Major!" she faltered distressfully.

He flung away his cigar, and invited her in.

"If you weren't the Commanding Officer, it wouldn't be so hard. There must be moments when you are not; couldn't I claim one of those?"

The Major deliberated. "Perhaps I'd better tell you that I have just become acquainted with what I believe you have come to disclose."

"You mean about Mr. Adams?" she cried. "Oh, nobody knew that he was here, but me — and I have not breathed it to a soul."

"One other person knew, for he has just reported to me the exact time that Adams left the village, and with whom he spent his time while here."

"He spent it with me," Julie doggedly declared. "He was lonely, going mad under that monster at Dao. He wanted to see civilization again. This was what meant civilization to him. Doesn't that seem awful, after what he has stuck through?"

"But would he risk his life, to say nothing of his commission, for such an impulse?" Some thought, some intimation that projected from the mind of the unknown person who had seen Adams and herself, stretched back of the Major's words. Julie's unpleasant experiences of late had commenced to sharpen her wits. The Major's informant, it was clear, had had something horrid to say. The kiss! The disappearing figure of that man—who could he have been! She began to be frightened. Glancing up, she saw that the Major perceived photographically all that was in her mind.

She cast about desperately in her thought. The Major's conservatism must be won over, if one of her spirit's company were to be saved from disgrace. It was useless to try to penetrate the understanding of this grim, practical man with the things Adams had poured out to her on the log that evening in the thicket; idle to deal in symbols with the soldier before her. Well, there was always the final, smashing conventional fact!

"Mr. Adams and I," she faltered, groping for the word, "had an understanding. It was for that that he risked his life—for me. I met him at Dao, and we had corresponded. Oh, please try to find him!" she cried.

"He has probably got on the wrong trail," the Major reassured her, "and will turn up in Dao yet."

"And you will do nothing awful to him?" she pleaded.

"We will do the best we can within the scope of the regulations, of course. He's had a tough time of it, and the fact of your being here just swept him out of his senses, probably."

Julie walked dazedly to the door. There she paused, and asked almost fiercely: "May I ask, Major, who your informant in this matter was?"

"I am sorry"—the Major appeared troubled—"but I promised not to say."

Adams's danger swept Julie's mind of every other thought. She was aware, nevertheless, of how fearfully, on the spur of the moment, she had complicated the situation that she had attempted to save.

She knew very little about military trials, but she was sure that in a time like this, actually one of war, an officer who had deliberately left his post in violation of orders, or in wilful misconstruction of permission, to travel through a hostile country, was in for a bad time of it, and possibly for disgrace. Any extenuating circumstances that she could advance it seemed her duty to offer, at whatever personal cost. But what of their future relations—of a bond cemented like this? In casting herself away, characteristically, on the instant, to save Adams, she had never given a thought to the issue.

Terry with his detachment of men was sent out from Tarlac in search of Adams. The Major also dispatched a force from his own garrison over the route that Adams had probably taken on his return. The country was wild and inaccessible, and it was hoped that he had merely gotten lost. For several days noth-

ing was heard from the searching parties. The Major's suspense, together with that of the whole garrison, grew painful. It was about the time of the atrocities in Negros and Samar, and the Americans knew not what each dark day might bring forth.

Several days later both parties came into Guindulman bringing Terry, dangerously wounded, and the body of Adams. He had been murdered in the hills — had lost his life in the new country that he had served.

After turning the country upside down, Terry had discovered Adams's horse in one of the dark little villages, and had forced the populace to disclose what had become of Adams. He found that Adams had come through the village very tired and hungry, and had asked for some food and a place to sleep for a few hours. He had a fine horse, a good pistol, and obviously some money; so the *presidente* had proffered him a dinner of hot chicken and had led him to a room. While he slept the *presidente* and his accomplices had strangled him with a rope, and thrown his body in a hole on the river bank.

After administering summary justice to these villains, Terry had started back, only to be caught himself in a bamboo trap laid in a *nipa* hut, into which he had stepped after reading a placard on the outside addressed to the Americans and promising that information of value could be obtained inside. Terry had fallen through the false floor which had been laid over sharpened bamboo poles planted below.

The priest refused to allow Adams's body even temporary sepulture in the cemetery of Guindulman, declaring that, since he was not a catholic, Adams could not be admitted to consecrated ground. The Major refused to take the priest's objections seriously, and

pointed out the fact that, in default of sepulture tax, the bones of those interred were unceremoniously thrown out of the graveyard. However over-crowded the cemetery might be, room for the present, the Major declared, must be made for the remains of the dead officer. It was a note-worthy fact that in Nahal there had never been sufficient accommodation for either the living or the dead.

The quarrel ended in the annexation to the cemetery of a bit of outside territory. So it was in unconsecrated ground, in a lonely corner of alien forests, that Adams was put to rest.

The sun beat down on the open grave, and on the rude box. A strange hush lay over the tropical atmosphere. Adams's horse, with his master's boots reversed against the saddle, stood arching his neck with sad pride.

The Major read the burial service. His harsh voice broke as he spoke of the good soldier Adams had been, and a tear stole down his stern cheek. The men pulled their hats down over their eyes, while Julie stole forward weeping and sprinkled flowers over the friend who had stepped out forever from the problem of the East.

CHAPTER X

A DESPERATE situation now confronted Julie. For two weeks she had been exhausting her ingenuity trying to keep her household going. The wages of Gregorio, the cook, were unpaid, and trifling with the pocket of a desperado is never wise — for it was patent from his physiognomy that Gregorio was an insurrecto, or about to become one. All of Julie's affairs had been in suspense pending the arrival of her month's salary. Then word had come that the boat carrying mail between Manila and Solano had been wrecked and the teachers' checks lost. Cablegrams sent to the chaotic Department in Manila evoked no response. Miss Hope, the itinerant Cræsus, did not seem embarrassed by the catastrophe; duplicates would undoubtedly be sent in time. But Julie could not wait another minute.

James brought hope into Julie's despair, however, by informing her that Miss Hope had told him that the Treasurer was prepared to advance officially temporary loans to straitened teachers. This was salvation through the gate of purgatory; for Julie desperately hated to approach Purcell in a capacity that would permit him to assume the aspect of bestowing a favor upon her.

But her affairs had come to such a pass that there was no alternative to be considered. She owed pressing debts around the town, to say nothing of those in Solano; and they all hurt her prestige as a teacher. She knew that she would have to go to him.

The evening after the burial of Adams, Calmiden appeared, to bid Julie good-by before leaving the next morning to take the field. The troops, with the exception of a small detachment for the protection of the post, had been ordered out to punish the lawless elements of the islands. Adams's death had uprooted the Major's last inner reluctance. He was at last going to take the responsibility of acting.

Calmiden sat down on the steps and looked about him at the miserable little house.

"It's horrible to think of your living here alone. There are three of us together there across the plaza. I thought of course that some one of those women would take you in. Aren't you afraid?"

"Perhaps — sometimes," the girl said slowly. "I have the musical clock, though."

Julie stirred uncomfortably. "It sings when the night is long and lonely — after the golden wine-bibbers, with their careless voices, have passed on; it sings through that dead stop of the night when people die on earth. Then I am afraid, until I hear — well, do you ever hear strange things? Did you ever sit up and listen, and hear the powers of the invisible universe sweep by? Some denizen down deep in me responds to all this, and makes out it knows what is going on. Otherwise it would be horrible!"

His face grew grave. "You should never have come here to undergo such things! Ah, what do you think you are making of life amid such hardships?"

"I don't know," Julie downcastly replied. "How can any one know until the sum is finally cast up? I am still trying to cast up the sum of Jack Adams's life, and make it come out right. The memory of our brief poignant talks, with the moan of isolated

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forests in them, comes back to me —" The girl's voice broke.

Calmiden glanced at her quickly. "You think a good deal about him, don't you?" Then he added, as if to get away from the thought, "Poor Jack! However did he come to do it? He seems to have lost his head over there. The Major knows what happened, but he never says a word."

Julie leaned forward earnestly. "Do you think that Jack understands — that it was worth while; that what he did over there all counted in the project — in the whole big scheme? For you see, he used to say we were grist for the mill — he and I; and I never understood that. It seems sort of disquieting to recall it."

"Oh, can't you see that, even if the revolution, or evolution, you talk about did come over here, you are too slight a fabric for such a thing? You don't belong in it."

"You mean I'm not strong? My aunt said that, too," she pondered sorrowfully.

"And if you were strong? Adams was strong, and he lost his life. If you play for big stakes over here, sometime you've got to lose."

Julie sat very still. At last she drew a letter from her dress, and held it before her in the dim light.

"This is such a strange letter," she murmured. "And it's so odd that it came just at the time Adams was killed. It's from that beautiful woman whom I told you they call the Empress of the East — and who, when I left Manila of my own free will, said I was mad to throw away my life. She is the only one I met there who has written to me. One individual counts for so little there — you understand. Well, I

did not completely drop out of her mind, anyway! Listen to what she says:

" "Dear Atlas: The Green God has told me to write to you. I don't know why — since he never gives reasons, nor answers questions. What has happened to you? Has the earth begun to tremble and slip from those white young shoulders? Or why does the Green God fear for the Shining Apostle to the East, and direct me to recall myself to you and cause you to bear in mind that there is always — Isabel? " "

Calmiden snatched the letter agitatedly. "Who is this Eastern Witch? What on earth does she mean? What has her horrible God to do with you? Promise me that you will never answer that letter, or go near her again!"

"Indeed, I shall probably never see her again, since my destiny lies down in jungles, and hers in the beautiful places of the world."

Calmiden dropped the letter, and regarded Julie with emotion. "And so this was your choice? Indomitable little being, with the luminous faith! Do you know that this island which I hated so with my whole soul — where the days were but blank heat waves and the nights a horrible hush — has become paradise since you walked into it?"

His tone took on a poignant wistfulness. "But your eyes seem to take you always out of my reach. . . . Ah, do you, after all, belong to the Green God? — you who say you have thrown in your lot with the East!"

Before Julie could reply, Brentwood came up the steps, and announced that the Major wanted Calmiden at once. Calmiden went away with him, throwing back of him a long glance.

The next day, Julie, gathering together the courage of necessity, went to see the Treasurer about the projected loan to the teachers.

Her heart beat violently as she climbed the stone flights of the Ayuntamiento, in the left wing of which the civil government offices were located. Purcell was in the Treasury, seated at his desk. As Julie appeared before him, a strange alteration flashed through his light eyes; a swift omen, gone before it could be captured.

"Good morning!" he said, politely rising. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

There was a preparedness in his attitude that cast the girl down more than ever. That it should be to him that things had finally led! She shrank from him almost visibly, and longed unutterably for retreat; but consciousness of her disastrous concerns pressed like a red-hot weight on her brain.

Purcell, never removing his eyes from her downcast face, waited. If Julie by some chance had glanced up at that moment! — but that abysmal ignorance concerning human nature which her uncle had deplored blinded her to the subtleties in which she was about to become enmeshed.

She lifted her eyes with a terrible effort, and Purcell immediately dropped his.

"Miss Hope says that you are advancing money out of the Treasury to the teachers, till their salaries arrive."

Purcell made a sudden movement, but did not speak.

"I have come on that errand. When my money comes I will repay you promptly."

Still studying the flushed, downcast face of the girl, Purcell reached out his arm to the safe and began to

move the knob of the combination. "How much do you wish?" he asked in a low voice.

As little as was humanly possible to get along on, was Julie's thought. It was torture to stand here and have money doled out to her by this man. She hesitated and finally murmured, "Thirty dollars!"

He glanced up quickly from the safe, almost in disappointment, she thought. He brought out a great roll of bills which he held before the girl's eyes while he slowly counted out the sum she had asked for.

Julie took the money with a quivering word of gratitude. After all, there was no such thing as hatred in the world!

Purcell, with an abrupt gesture, turned away.

Julie went home with the wherewithal to make the world turn a little longer. Gregorio was paid, and thus enriched, lit out for the hills to the solar plexus of the insurrection, where by virtue of his brigand appearance he belonged.

The troops returned after a vigorous quest of the insurrectos, whom they had been able to engage but once. Owing to the impenetrable character of the country, the insurgents had managed everywhere to hide themselves from conflict. Balked and baffled by the unabashed desperados sitting unattainably upon their horrible hills, the Major was in a furious frame of mind. With his limited facilities, he seemed powerless to cope with the situation; and unless something should intervene in his behalf, it seemed that these people, who, as Delphine had expressed it "greatly enjoyed to insurrect," would go on warring forever, through savage lust of the thing.

One morning shortly after the Major's return, Julie, on her way to school, became aware of some deep agi-

tation that was shaking the village. From hut to hut, some tremendous portent had flashed as if by racial telepathy, till every soul in the village was aware of it. Julie, looking up at their windows where they were foregathered, brown secret beings with terror in their gestures, was unable to get any clew to the mystery.

Upon reaching the school house, she was handed a letter which she read with much astonishment. It was from the Old Maid, and requested, in the name of the mothers of the children, that school be suspended that afternoon. Moreover, the Old Maid besought Julie with all the fervor of the Spanish language to come to her house at two o'clock, for an "*asunto muy importante*."

Julie learned a little later, to her further mystification, that the girls' school would likewise be dismissed at twelve, for the day.

Returning home at the noon hour, Julie found the little houses on stilts looking strangely deserted. Apprehension seized her. Had the women too decamped for the hills?

Promptly at two o'clock, she walked down the hill to the Old Maid's mansion, and found in that formidable vestal's extensive grounds all the women of Guindulman, as well as those from the neighboring districts, as far even as Loboc. Every dusky sister of them was in a high state of consternation. As if that were not astounding enough, they had attached indissolubly to their persons very nearly all the children in the world—and these were shrieking in panic. As Julie quickly recognized, the barren and the unwedded had appropriated as their share the orphaned and deserted; and the orphaned and deserted were howling in ap-

parent rebellion at belonging to anybody at all. Even the Old Maid had one wriggling little goddess of the dust — whom she ordinarily smacked soundly for poaching on her premises — touchingly tucked under her arm.

Delphine alone had been able to elude these theatrical adoptions, and skipped satirically free among the leaves. The moment, however, that he glimpsed his teacher, he ran up to her and stuck his head docilely under her arm like a young ox under the yoke.

The women were all chattering hysterically. Suddenly the Old Maid burst out oratorically to Julie. "Dios! What are we to do?"

"But what is happening?" Julie demanded.

"You have not heard? Christus!" She flung up her arms to heaven, while a piercing wail broke like a dirge through the mango trees, "*Los Macabebes! Los Macabebes!*"

Then Julie understood the meaning of the panic of weeping. From the North was coming a band of those unique and redoubtable little fighters, the Macabebes Scouts, of whose name every other tribe in the Archipelago stood in awe. The Macabebes, for centuries the friends of the white man and the enemies of all other tribes. There was no forest retreat they could not ferret out and no danger that they feared.

In these far islands, they were a terrible legend. The people feared them like the devil out of hell.

The women continued to sob, and to repeat, panic-stricken their dreadful monotone, "*Los Macabebes! Los Macabebes!*"

The Old Maid commanded silence, and whirled upon Julie. "You must think of a way to help us, you who have gone to school and have seen the earth. All

our men will be butchered. There will be no sons, husbands or fathers left. The Macabebes are monsters out of hell. They eat babies, and suck the blood of the dying. They will make ashes of this island. There will not be one man left. Dios!"—she flung herself down on her knees, and the others dropped with her, beating their breasts—"if God made your brain better than ours, save us!"

"What can I do?" demanded Julie passionately. "I have no power over such things? Has not the Comandante held out to your men every opportunity to embrace order and peace, and have they not scorned them all? Have they not preferred rather to listen to the one malcontent who delights to sow discord between the two races to which he belongs?"

After this fearful piece of daring, she swept on:

"Hasn't the Comandante promised you peace and protection and a good government for all? And do not your men continue to remain in the hills from which the Macabebes, for whom he sent, will dislodge them at last?"

"Come!" commanded the Old Maid. "Gather your children about you, and go down on your knees to the Comandante, and don't rise till he promises to order back those devils from the North. You, *Maestra*, will lead us and speak for us!"

Julie glanced about her impotently. This desperately misguided swarm of women had put themselves into her hands. She was terribly sorry for them, for after all they were only women who, uninformed as to the motives of the men in the hills, had through weary months held their families together. A thought struck her. Her face lighted with some inner vision. She halted the female mob. Was it possible to make

simple creatures like these revolutionary? The women looked at her, and waited.

"It is useless to go to the Comandante empty-handed," she declared. "He is angry over the death of his lieutenant. And many times your men have promised to lay down their arms, only to break every time their promise. On this island no crops are growing, no towns are flourishing. Those of you who have property have had it seized by outlaws, and those of you who are poor must continue to support alone your children, and to endure your anxiety as well as the tax levied by Andegas upon every soul of you. It has all grown worse and worse until you can not bear it any longer.

"The new government does not extort; it protects the poorest among you. It will give you liberty, schools, the right to accumulate property without fearing any man. It seeks to make you a happy people, and the most enlightened in the East.

"Make your choice between the two, you women. Deliver to the men your ultimatum — that you have decided in favor of government instead of anarchy. What! Cannot the women who, deserted and unprotected, have borne the brunt of the war, take a stand alone? Each one of you has power over one man who must himself already be weary of hardship and separation. Rouse yourselves to act, for in this way and in this way only can the Macabebes be kept away! Stop the war, the outlawry, and the destruction of a beautiful island. Give your word to the Major — the sworn word of the women of Nahal — that if he will countermand his order for the Macabebes, the men will come in and deliver up their arms."

Into the silence that surrounded her she continued to

exhort. "You, Marianna Tectos!" addressing the Old Maid, "are rich and powerful. Many men will listen to you, especially if you say that your purse will be closed against them if they do not go over to the new government. You, even, Nemecia Victoria who have power over many men, we ask you to help. And Señora Pandilig, tell your nephews you will disinherit them and give your money to the government if they do not come around. Oh, you all have your lever, if you are courageous enough to apply it. Do you agree?"

The women stood in thoughtful silence.

"We must defy our men for the government!" Señora Pandilig exclaimed.

"To save them from the Macabebes!" Nemecia Victoria reminded. The dreaded name thrown into their thoughts with this argument by one of their own number had deep effect. They stirred and moved under the sun, and thought. An unaccustomed feat!

Julie glancing over the crowd, reading the faces in this moment of stress, held that each brown woman was weighing just how much power she could personally, in an issue like this, exert.

Comments ran down the lines: "The men will be angry!"

"They will be worse than angry, Mother of Jesus, when the Macabebes tear out their hearts."

"What are we to do, Constancia?"

"What do you think, Celesta?"

"Ah, it is beyond us."

"And if we don't dare!"

Thus rippled their breathless fears and uncertainties. A concourse of brown women facing a crucial decision which they could not absolutely consummate, until

the Old Maid hurdled them across with a leap. With a daring excitement that for an instant lifted her above her world, she cried, "We will tell the Comandante that we, the women of Nahal, will undertake to bring in the men. We will go before him now!"

The procession started to surge forward, growing, as it drew near Headquarters, more emotional at every step. Against this collective femininity, Mike was powerless. It passed him in an oblivious white heat, in an unassailable mood.

Calmiden, whose office was in the *entresuelo*, stuck his crest against the grated bars of the window and stared in stupefaction.

Julie, bareheaded in the sun, her face reflecting unnameable emotions towered aloft in the heart of the avalanche.

"Dear, dear! What's happening?" Calmiden demanded.

"Women! Oceans of 'em, overturning history! We want to see the Major."

"For heaven's sake, don't overturn anything here! He won't have it. Tell them to go home, and you stay and talk to me, you exalted green-eyed person."

"Calmiden!" roared the incensed Major from the upper regions. Clearly he had perceived the onslaught from his window, to which the worsted Mike had valiantly climbed for assistance. "What do you mean by letting all those women past the door?"

Calmiden looked at Julie in comic despair. "Does he expect me to wrestle individually with the feminine population of the island? What are you all up to anyhow?"

"Tell them," yelled the Major, "that I refuse absolutely to see them."

But the dogged remnant who had not yet succeeded in getting inside the building merely continued to push. Masses of agitated women driving up the stairs and sweeping along with them in their advance a wondering lieutenant, an indignant sergeant-major, two native clerks and an interpreter! A flood of women inundating the furniture and bearing down on one solitary figure that still withstood them. The Major, in impregnable dignity, sat fast in his chair in rigid military fashion while the excited Mike, picking up everything he could find, fired it upon the advance. Women fundamentally annoyed the Major, and to have all the women in the world surrounding him in an unescapable embrace was too dreadful to sustain. He sat like Pharaoh in the midst of the visitation of the plagues, sputtering under his breath.

The routed office force stood helpless, while the room rang with the classic wail of "*Los Macabebes! Los Macabebes!*"

The Major addressed them. "Tell them," he said to the interpreter, "that for two years I have exhausted every peaceful means to get the men of this island to return to their homes. They take the oath of allegiance only to gain access to the town and commit fresh atrocities. This is one of the last islands to continue in a state of outlawry and disorder. The Macabebes shall come!"

Calmiden and the Sergeant-Major exchanged unofficial glances of pure delight. A hush of sheer fright closed the women's throats.

"You killed my Lieutenant," the Major accused. "Your men strangled him in the night when he was defenselessly sleeping. You have bad leaders who inoculate you with their passions. There have been

wicked deeds and murders. These things must end."

The women wept in terrible despair, helplessly wringing their brown hands. Brown supplicating hands groping up out of the dark!

Julie, carried along by the throng, tried to speak. The Major was right. Yet if Adams had lost his life, he had given it — to the East. There could be no price set on blood so shed. The vision rose before her of lonely Dao, and Adams guarding its destiny. She wriggled forward through the women.

"Major," she said, "these women have come to offer you a proposal of peace. If you will agree to delay the coming of the Macabebes, they will promise to bring in their men."

The Major stared at her incredulously. "The women! What have they to do with the insurrection?"

"As things stand now, a great deal. There are only women left in the villages now — without food. The burden of such an existence has become too much for them to endure. They will no longer furnish funds for Andegas. Maria Tectos and Nemecia Victoria are rich women; so are the Señoras Calextas and Pandilig. The women are the backbone of the community, and they give you their sacred promise. They are weary of war, and wish to embrace the Government of the United States."

The Major strode over to the window and turned his back on them. The women stared tremulously at him — but Julie motioned them back. He turned at last, frowning thoughtfully.

"Maria Tectos!" he said abruptly to the Old Maid, "Will you take the oath of allegiance? And you, Nemecia? And the rest of you?"

"But I am a woman!"

"You are undertaking to make peace like a man!"

"And I swear before the High God?"

"That you will henceforth be a faithful adherent of the Government of the United States. Put up your hands."

Maria and Nemecia Victoria lifted trembling brown arms. Dumbly the concourse followed their example. Julie alone understood the valor of those uplifted arms. All these women were imperiling their souls before the Padre for this terrible oath. But the Major had agreed to hold back the Macabebes, and for that they could perform this miracle.

Calmiden watched Julie closely, as they went out together.

"You put them up to this. What was the use?"

"If they do bring peace —"

"Utopian dreamer! It will be the first time it has happened that way."

"But I know these people a little. Maria will leave no stone unturned. She did not need that perfectly valueless oath that the Major imposed upon her to scare her into the truth."

"How can you be so interested in them?"

"This is my destiny," she said.

"Your destiny!" He looked soberly at her.

There with the tropical sunlight beating down upon them, they seemed suddenly to face their deeper selves.

CHAPTER XI

JULIE had received a note from Calmiden. "We will cross the causeway to-night," it said.

She waved back the toiling future generations of light, and took the note to the window. What did it mean? The few lines managed to convey a message quite beyond their import. She read them over and over, then gazed across the white winding road and the green banana trees, to the causeway lying like a high thoroughfare between two worlds. Was to-day to be the last of an old existence, which she was to shed like a discarded garment? Would the footsteps that had followed strange paths in the East turn about completely, and the dream that had burned in her soul be left forever unfulfilled?

The breeze swayed the sacred tree of India beneath the window, and its golden incense full of mystic and exhilarating intimations showered upon the air. Julie was carried on the wave of its magic to a roof garden in Manila and the hero who had first overwhelmed the horizon of her youth. Often, looking out on this glowing landscape, she had seen this image, but more and more as something lost in the swift passage of life.

She would not see him any more. Fate, that fate which ruled this world had arranged it so. Her destiny lay along the beaten paths of the world. She was too small an atom, as Calmiden had said, to survive the great chances of the coming upheaval, or to dare ever, ever to achieve a force like Barry McChord's.

His spirit had lighted areas of her life tremendously. Nobody ever had so stirred or quickened the pulse of her soul. But that spirit was receding before the hard facts of existence that Nahal had brought. It was getting too terribly hard, with so much pressing upon her, to inhabit two spheres. And if anybody in the North had given her a thought again, he had not taken the trouble to make it known. She had dropped completely out of those great activities, and not a reverberation of her life or its yearnings had reached the far-off goal of her city of dreams. She herself shrinking to her real, insignificant dimensions.

The tangle of her affairs complicated all her thought, and sent a chill wave over her. The cold, hard, insuperable fact of her debts! She owed the merchants in Solano, the small merchants of her village, and still, after the lapse of many months, she owed Mrs. Morris a huge obligation. Finally, and very nearly the worst of all, there was the desperate debt in which Purcell was involved. A pauper and a gambler with life! How else could a person who had managed to put herself in everybody's debt be called? Clearly she had demonstrated that she could not handle her own life, to say nothing of playing a part in that complex organization to which she had had the assumption to aspire.

A great agitation came over her when in that one solemn final moment she looked into her soul and bade good-by to all she had come to do. Slowly she began to efface and obliterate the old orders of life, and the transcendent consecration of the past. The East to which she had come with a torch became a mere drear fact of over-powering millions. Ages, and the tried souls of many men would be offered up be-

fore the East found its freedom. What she did or did not do could not weigh in the infinite balance.

Slowly she turned back to the room. The brown gnomes were sweating terribly in the throes of composition, mining the realms of thought for a few throttled ideas. Never anywhere were they so dearly born. Julie stopped still to stare at them. "Poor little generation of light!" she murmured.

Delphine glanced up at her with his quick brown eyes. He was the barometer of the class — a youthful personality that had escaped the general languor of the race. He watched the other boys, and interpreted their needs. He seldom sat in his seat, but was, with his books under his arm, almost always in a state of itinerant education. He had been a devotee of the betel-nut, but at Julie's solicitation had given it up.

The children marched out at the end of the morning session. Julie thrust her note in her pocket, and was following after them when Delphine, trailing by a string a big bright red tropical beetle, stopped her.

"You stay here always, *Maestra*? You never go away?" he urged earnestly.

Julie glanced at him absently. "Go home, Delphine," she said gently.

"Here," said the boy, "is a present for you of this beautiful bug — if you will not go."

"No, thank you, Delphine. I know it would break your heart to give up Balthazar, though he bites nasty welts all over you all the time."

But Delphine stuck along after her.

A quickening of her being took place as she came out into the street. After all, she was in the golden possession of life. She picked some heavily fragrant

flowers and thrust them in her hair. She was young, and Calmiden was young.

She moved along in the light like the heart of the golden day, her shimmering head lifted to the perfume of the Ylang-Ylang, and a hundred visions stirring in her brain. Behind her unperceived, Delphine and the scarlet splendor of Balthazar desolately trailed.

In the evening she donned the green dress; but as she slipped the green bracelet over her wrist, a sinister shadow swept for a moment upon her mood.

A lithe white figure appeared in the road. She went out to meet it. She had never seen Calmiden when he was so beautifully grave. She walked along beside him. Neither of them spoke.

They went down to the beach, where leaving the village behind they walked silently along the shore. The water washed darkly on clean white sand with the beat and rhythm of a majestic poem of which their emotions supplied the motive. They pressed on through the starlit hush till the causeway lay directly before them.

Wonderful lighted bridge! Water from great distances bore up on either bank, and in mighty rushes took itself off again into space. When the moonlight sprinkled through the darkness, this narrow shining strip stood aloft over the fretted world.

As they started to cross it, Julie said: "I feel as if I were suspended between heaven and earth! I hope I won't drop."

"Are you afraid?"

They stopped short. With the turbulence of passion the water was hurling darkly about them. The land appeared to be groups of mystic shadows, and the stars were down almost within reach.

"It's all said around me," Calmiden declared in an unsteady voice. "I have loved you from the first, and I shall always love you. Nothing can change that."

An agitating vibration passed through Julie's body. Was this the hour of fulfillment, toward which she had been moving like a star?

"Promise me," he urged, "that you will belong to me forever, that you will go with me out of this poisonous East."

"Of course," she said; "of course," speaking like one in a dream. "Why, are you too afraid that something might happen?"

"We could be married soon, and have done with all fears."

Julie started perceptibly. Her thoughts had never traveled that far. Marriage seemed vaguely a sort of risk to her emotion.

"Why can't we go on for a while as we are — till you are ordered away?" she queried nervously. "It is so perfect as it is."

"But my existence is so uncertain! And why should you continue to be flung around in this whirlpool? Some one should look out for you."

"Because I am such a little fool that I can't look out for myself? Oh, let us wait till the end of my term. I came out here, you see, really to do something — and I am so soon to drop it all!" An unconscious anguish crept into her voice.

"I believe this country has put a spell upon you, or you wouldn't be putting me off."

They were walking now along the causeway. The island ahead of them lay like a sable mesh of mystery, with midnight archways through its dense foliage.

Startling creepers, like multiform arms of an unseen body, groped over the heart of the earth. A sad fragrance floated out to them. Once or twice the moonlight making bold with the forest lit up its stilly beautiful chambers.

Julie made a sudden startled movement. "There is somebody over there! He is stirring along under the trees. He looks all black. He is watching us! Come away!" She dragged frantically at Calmiden's hand.

He hesitated, his gaze strained into the darkness.

"Don't you see that you are only one man — with only one pistol? There may be a lot of men in there." She pulled him back.

He yielded at last. "I've got you to look out for," he muttered.

They ran swiftly back over the causeway, a target they well knew for any one who might wish to shoot.

"I was a fool to take you to such a place!" Calmiden exclaimed when they had reached the other end in safety.

"I am sure it was the priest!" Julie panted. "Where rather than to that Eleusian island would that dark spirit go? Those black trees just ached with the hatred of that Lucifer soul. Over there, he plots to stir up discord among men. There on that ground that he has made forbidding with supernatural tales he plans insurrections."

"I wonder how many rifles he's got stored away over there," Calmiden said.

Then he sighed. "We didn't get across the causeway, after all!"

CHAPTER XII

FROM his upper state chambers, the Major was beckoning to Julie with as much excitement as that statuesque personality was capable of manifesting.

"Come up a minute," he called. "I have great news for you!"

As Julie entered the room he greeted her with a smile that thawed every line of his stony visage.

"The insurgents will surrender in Guindulman next Thursday," he told her. "They will deliver up their arms, to a man, and will take the oath of allegiance! This might be called the 'Peace of Women,' don't you think so? They have carried the thing through. If it hadn't been for you, young lady, those Macabebes would be down here right now. You belong to work like this. The Island of Nahal ought to canonize you!"

Julie had never been so acutely stirred. After all, a part of the Great Adventure was coming true!

The natives of Nahal entered into a state of inordinate rejoicing. On the evening before the memorable Thursday they gave a ball of towering magnificence. It was true that at the ending of the war almost every one was bankrupt, but nothing so spectacular had ever happened in Nahal. It would be in the Manila papers — it would be in the papers of America that the redoubtable Nahalites, of their own free and enlightened will, had come to peace.

Julie went to the ball with Calmiden, notwithstand-

ing the fact that Purcell, in a formal note, had claimed the privilege of escorting her. Julie had been cruelly bewildered and apprehensive of the consequences of her refusal, because the Treasurer was now the actual head of civil affairs.

It was indeed a magnificent ball, but the Americans felt considerable discomfiture upon finding their hosts still wearing arms, when they had come unarmed.

And a breach occurred between Julie and Calmiden, because Julie accepted the Insurgent General's invitation to dance. From Calmiden's point of view the request was the next thing to an insult; but since this was the culmination of the *coup d'état* which she herself had instigated, the fear of jeopardizing it in the slightest degree had her caught fast. Not until the next day were the insurgents to give up their arms, and in case Andegas became incensed, a little thing like a dance might overthrow the whole course of destiny. It was perfectly possible for Andegas to stick a knife in her back, as a signal for a general slaughter. Moreover there was something in the perilous uncertainty of the moment that exhilarated her. She had bent her soul upon a great adventure, and she thrilled to the dim things it foreshadowed — things that swam before her stirred vision like the pageant of the worlds in the night sky which she glimpsed through the galleries.

When they left the ball, the Americans departing en masse for mutual protection, Calmiden gave very clear expression to his displeasure.

"I can't understand you — the things you do. What came over you to consent to dance with that half-breed? Imagine their getting up a ball and coming bristling to the teeth with weapons, just to

tease us! That ought to be enough for you forever! What makes you act as if you belonged to this hideous game?"

"I do," Julie under the fever of the night recklessly replied. "I understood this particular thing, and I was going to see it through!"

"Even against my wishes? To dance with Malay cut-throats — you a star!"

"I would have danced with the devil under the same conditions."

"Julie, talk sense. However am I to understand you? Chasing chimeras that will bring you nowhere — whereas you and I are all that count. Give up these terrible notions. You don't know what you are about — what, my God, all this may lead you to!"

They parted at Julie's door with a feeling of estrangement, like the prick of pain.

The next day Calmiden left for Solano, to secure some supplies for the garrison. He went on a boat which had come into Nahal harbor the night before, bringing mail.

At school, Julie, who had not yet received her mail, learned that salary checks had arrived for both James and Miss Hope. At noon she hurried home, fluttering with anticipation and relief. The thirty dollars was nearly all gone. At the thought of Purcell, she shivered.

With trembling fingers she opened her letters. One was from Mrs. Calixter. She thrust it aside to hunt further for the check; but her money had, inconceivably, not come. The disaster of the wrecked boat had been rectified for everybody but her; all the others now had their checks. What sinister design was back of this? Soon her desperate situation would become

known, and against such publicity her pride forcibly rebelled.

She was facing a critical state of affairs. Although certain varieties of food were cheap in the village, her resources would soon be unequal to purchasing even these. She had been doing her own cooking — very badly indeed; and suffering from it, as well as from a too rigid economy of diet.

Moreover the school, which was the center of her life, was subtly, as under an evil enchantment, disintegrating. Every day disclosed more and more empty benches, the youthful occupants of which, in Julie's dreams, were to have been shining pillars of the future. The girl's efforts to locate the cause of the disaffection came up against a dead wall. The secret psychology of the East confronted her. In vain, after facing those deserted benches that struck like a blow at the very roots of her spirit, had she appealed to the parents. The women were silently sympathetic, the men were non-committal; but none reached out a hand to her.

She guessed only too well whose power alone was great enough to deflect the boys from their upward course. The souls of their parents were throttled by their leader, at whose heels they would have gone to the devil.

The priest had learned who had instigated peace — Maria Tectos having hung in the terrible limbo of excommunication till full confession had been forthcoming. His spiritual subjects had begun to show the disquieting effects of revolutionary new thought, and he hastened to stretch out inexorable arms over his dominion. A spiritual czar, whose whole power in life lay in his compelling hold on the souls of men,

he did not intend that any of his chattels should escape their bonds. He had an overweening sense of possession, but little real interest in his creatures. Above everything conceivable, he hated the Americans. Since he had laid his special curse upon Julie's establishment and had not interfered with Miss Hope's school, it was perfectly clear upon whom his ill-will was concentrated. With the vital structure of her work shaking about her, she was in the worst possible straits.

Her money, or rather Purcell's, had come to an end. She was facing starvation. There was no one whom she could bring herself to approach for help. She summoned her last forces of resistance. Calmiden must certainly be back within a few days, and the money from Manila could not diabolically hold away much longer.

She picked up Mrs. Calixter's letter. It was full of explanations of divers sorts, and threw light in multiple directions — belated light.

She and her husband had been to India on an extended official visit with the Governor-General. She had meant to write sooner to Julie, but on a trip like that, Julie would understand, a great many things had been wiped out of mind.

"Barry McChord, whom you remember, I know, and who still holds himself as your friend, told me on my return of his fruitless efforts to find out what had become of you — and a very strange mix-up it was. I was gone — and your Department gave your location as Solano. But when Barry wrote there he received the answer, after an unconscionable time, that there was no such person on duty there. The Department, upon being again questioned, hazarded the theory

that you might have died or gone home — although it admitted that of such events it should have a record. At any rate you were given up for lost. What chaos inconceivable! And that red-headed schemer — who I suspect was to blame for all this — is still away on a long rest in Japan! I believe that wretch has been deliberately miscarrying you on his lists so that upon investigation he could point to his magnanimity in assigning you to the superior station of Solano. If you would, brave little Julie, insist upon going to the dangers of Nahal, he may have argued, whatever happened to you should not be set down to his account. If you wandered off any place else, it was not his fault. But how you have received your salary I can't think unless he has made it his own concern."

And was that why, Julie wondered, she was left in these straits; and would be — until the red-headed man came back?

She read on:

"A little army woman whose husband is on leave here from your very spot cleared up the mystery. She told Barry how much alive you were — ending revolutions, and transforming the Malay race; and being proposed to by the entire bachelor officer personnel of the battalion — one of whom you were most certainly going to accept.

"Barry told me he could understand how you had forgotten your earlier friends. I believe he is going to China, and perhaps he will not come back. Each time he goes, he says he may not come back."

Julie put the letter down weakly. Ah, she was not at all successful, as Mrs. Smith had said. Her school was almost gone — and to-day she had had scarcely anything to eat.

When it was quite dark, she took a walk, staring into the palely lit jungle as she passed. Overhead one brilliant constellation blazed. It seemed to hang over a distant city far to the north, beyond these troubled southern seas. She put out her arms to its light.

CHAPTER XIII

A DAY came when Julie knew what it was to go without food. She reasoned, in the midst of a bad headache, that she was not the first person to whom this had happened, and that to go a few days without eating was not absolutely menacing to one's existence.

The next day she unearthed a wrinkled *camote*, and Delphine presented her with a couple of *chicos*. Her giddy brain collapsed, however, over the boys' arithmetic, which suddenly had become as incomprehensible to her as Euclid. On the third morning, she was wholly incapacitated, and before the school hour, dropped down on a couch, where she dozed off from sheer weakness.

At ten o'clock she heard as from a great distance the whistle of the boat. Calmiden had come! She dragged herself up and made an effort to dress, but she, strangely, felt no interest in a world that seemed to have receded immeasurably out of her actual experience. From tense struggle in its atmosphere, she had floated off into sleepy planets where dreams were real. She tumbled back on the couch and went to sleep.

When she came back once more to mundane affairs, it was about three o'clock. Everything was still and lonely. Calmiden had not yet appeared. He was always busy, though, for hours with the unloading of the boat. Perhaps he had expected her to come down

to the wharf to greet him, and she had been too dazed to think of it. She dressed with closed eyes.

A knock on the door startled her senses into activity. She ran her fingers hurriedly through her deranged hair and opened the door. Not Calmiden, but Dwight confronted her, looking greatly perturbed.

"I want to talk to you — just a bit —" he hesitated, "if you don't mind."

Julie led him in.

He dropped down on the bare edge of the chair that she motioned to, and stared at her aghast. "Lord!" he exclaimed, "you look like a ghost! Have you been ill?"

Julie shook her head. "What have you to tell me?"

He was clearly at a difficulty to reply. Finally he blurted out: -

"Why didn't you come to me, Julie, and let me help you — I'd have been only too proud to do so — instead of playing into the hands of that blackguard?"

Julie paled. "Purcell!" she murmured in dismay.

"Then you know?"

Again she shook her head dumbly.

Dwight pursed his lips in a solemn whistle. "Gad! Some folks would say it was none of my business, but I can't stand by and see you facing the thing so pluckily and not lend a hand."

"What did Mr. Purcell do?" Julie demanded heavily.

"He's been taking his meals at the bachelors' mess lately — while he had no cook. To-day at the lunch table he brought up your name, and he meant to do it to death. But he was clever about it. He didn't want any one to stop him before he'd let out his powder. He began by saying that you were engaged to Adams.

You bet that made a stir — your being engaged all the while you were letting the rest of us give you a rush! Purcell said that he had seen Adams here in this town with you, that he had made that fatal ride to see you, and that he himself had seen you kiss Jack Adams good-by. Moreover, he declared, that when the anxiety about Adams was at its height you informed the Major that Adams had been in Guindulman and confessed your relation to him. That was a stagger for us — all right, Julie, you'll admit. He said that the Major himself had told him all this.

"Now several of us had liked you, Julie, ever so much — and we got rather excited at your way of playing the game. Purcell went on to say that you had had an affair with him, and with Terry, who had also kissed you — along with Adams and others. Seems he got the information about Terry from Miss Hope. He also said you owed money to everybody, and that the firms in Solano had written continuously to him about it. But when the creature, quite gone with hatred and jealousy, said that you had borrowed money from him, and that anybody could have you for a sweet-heart, I kicked him out."

Dwight had not dared to look at her during this recital. Her head was bent down over her two clenched hands which lay in her lap.

"Kenneth was not there!" she murmured, illimitable satisfaction in her quivering voice.

"But he *was* there!" Dwight cried — only to regret the next moment that he had spoken.

Julie had shot up out of her chair and was gazing at him with wide eyes of horror. As she stood there staring out of her ghastly pale face, and not speaking, a sense of fear for her rose in Dwight.

"I tell you, Julie, I'll stand by you through everything!" he vowed.

She clutched hard at the back of the chair for support. Her limbs were weak; her soul was shaken to its uttermost depths, but she must still make a stand against this falling world.

"I did borrow money," she said in a voice so faint it seemed to trail after her thought like a thin curl of smoke, "not from Purcell, but from the Treasury, as I supposed. I was in the direst need. None of us had received our salaries for months. I hung out as long as I could, for I was afraid of him. But I was simply driven to him at last. What a horrible net he has built around me! Terry — himself — Adams, Ah! Yes, I did kiss Adams good-by!"

"Were there any witnesses present when he gave you the money?"

Julie shook her head.

"You poor, unsophisticated infant! Don't you know that it would have been a criminal offense for him to use government funds for his own purposes? You stepped right into his trap. He was waiting for you, the rascal, and knew perfectly well that you wouldn't know what you were doing."

"No, clearly, I have not at any time known what I was about!" She crumpled, stunned, into a chair.

Dwight rushed to her. "My God! Is it possible that you've been starving yourself with all of us right around to help!"

"I guess I have — but it wasn't anything compared to this. And who are all of you, who were ready to help — as you say?" the girl cried out in anguished bitterness. "Didn't you all stand by and listen while that man told his vile lies? You see now why I have

no more pupils in the school, why everything's gone to smash, and I'm hopelessly ruined, as he meant I should be?"

"Be just to us, Julie! We were shocked at your light treatment of Adams."

"Ah, I was never engaged to Jack Adams. That was a desperate, stupid lie of mine, which I hoped would help him out of the scrape. As for the other men that I thought to be my friends — Oh! this terrible land — where we're all strangers to one another after all!"

"But this story must be put down. It's all over the town. You can do that best yourself!"

"The story of my own infamy — I must put down!" She laughed hysterically. "You see, Dwightie, it's so fun-ny — when I came offering all I had!"

When the young man had left the house, Julie slipped suddenly and insensibly to the floor.

It was dusk when she thoroughly came to herself. Her brain was clearer, and into it faintly crept the hope that Calmiden might emerge successfully out of the catastrophe. Betrayal on his part — however odious Purcell had sought to represent her — was inconceivable.

Dwight had dispatched a boy with a mountain of viands, which she barely touched. She was not hungry. This was no time for eating, when all the issues of her life were at stake. With a heart that stopped beating at every foot-fall upon the road outside, she sat unmoving among the shadows. Every minute must bring him to her need. This day could not end in this monstrous state of affairs.

But as dusk deepened into night and no sign of

Calmiden appeared, a bitter frenzy of anger stirred up in the wretched girl's heart. What kind of a man after all was he who could stand by, without offering a protest, while her enemies calumniated her? Here in her humbled pride and disgrace, she was crouched waiting for a man who had so clearly repudiated her that he did not even deign to proffer an explanation of his conduct. From the affairs of this notorious nobody — her promiscuous love affairs, and wholesale debts, he had contemptuously withdrawn himself. Calmiden, she knew, had the conventional notions about the impeccability of a woman's name. It was her whole duty, as he expressed it, to keep it "unsullied." He made sharp, very sharp distinctions in his standards for the sexes. All women were shoed into one corner of the universe, from which he dared them on the direst penalties to emerge, while the men gamboled in the rest of its wide areas in a fashion which he tolerantly chose to ignore. And all the while he sincerely believed himself the broadest minded man on earth. He had frequently crushed Julie in their arguments with his towering Victorian morality. Julie had attributed what she considered his charmingly archaic habit of mind to the fact that he had derived his education at West Point, a sort of Military Monastery where women were barred.

"Pooh!" Calmiden had replied to this, "girls come up there in shoals!"

"But you see them only on Dress Parade! What do you know about them in their own environment, in the real phases of life that stretch back of the Dress Parade?"

"It was nice to have them come!"

"Ah! I think that that is just a little of what is

the matter with you, Kenneth. You began your life with *woman coming to you!*"

Julie admitted, as she sat waiting for him, that she had committed some intolerable foolishness. It was perfectly true that in order to afford herself the thrill of conquest and satisfy at the same time an errant poetic opulence in her nature, she had inconsiderately, joyously and, as she had believed, inconsequentially, permitted most of the men to make love to her. And that not singly but simultaneously — and now she had been found out. Slowly began to awaken in her mind the significance of every human act in the infinite chain of cause and effect. Every one of these men had been humanly piqued and curious. That, perhaps, accounted for their listening to Purcell. Concerning Jack Adams, Julie felt her one justifying thrill. Her comrade at arms!

Perhaps she should have confessed this incident to Calmiden, she thought, but she had never been able to bring herself to speak of that adventure, now that Adams was "out of it." It seemed something sealed forever between him and her.

Another hour passed and the girl's black resentments and outraged pride rose into fresh tumult. The pride of the Dreschells was their dominant trait. The world might hold Calmiden's position in life better than hers, he might tower in immeasurable contempt over the sordid disaster of her life, yet she had one bomb left to deliver. She would drive him out of her life. He had forced his way into it. The world might go hang! Purcell could make it believe what he would. But upon one person the outrage to her dignity and pride should be indelibly branded, so that never till the end of his life would he be able to forget.

His moment had come and passed — in the dark, terrible hours, when frightened and half starved, she sat waiting for him to come and set things right. Her brain had traveled the whole blistered course of thought for extenuation, and now, roused to a fury of injury, she determined to hurt Calmiden in the last way possible — to cast him off finally and completely. That he had already accomplished this repudiation beyond anything that lay in her power goaded her to madness.

In a suffocation of emotions she wrote the letter. It was not what she said in the letter but the way she found to say it, the white heat of the words, that must later have seared a path through his brain.

“My vulgar debts repulsed you! The insinuations of that man were preëminently revolting to your sense of pride. Not to speak! It was an easy way out! There is another kind of Judas, it seems! You sat and sold me away by your silence. You have done what I did not dream it was possible for any living being to do. For such a betrayal there can be no explanation ever. None is humanly possible.”

She summoned Pablo Cherico from the other side of the house, and told him to get Delphine, who lived not far away. The little boy, roused out of his bed, came running. One person in this disheveled world was always eager to serve her. She handed the letter to Delphine.

“Take it at once to Teniente Calmiden, at the Mess. Put it in his hands!”

She stumbled back into the house, given over to the demons of darkness and despair.

When Julie awoke next morning, she found a bundle of mail tied with a string, lying on her doorstep. There were two official letters. Now when disaster

was quite complete and irretrievable, her money had come — all the arrears of it. A week ago and her life would have traveled into safe places. Now there was nothing left but the bleak privilege of paying her debts.

Delphine, with the captive Balthazar grubbing along in the dust, appeared. "I gave the letter into the hands of the Teniente, last night, as you told me to do. He was already in bed. The house is very ugly. No flowers on the table, no lace in the windows, like in the beautiful residence of Mrs. Sméeth — nodding but banjoes."

"What did he say?" Julie cut in on him.

"Nodding at all. *Maestra!* He take the letter and read it, while I wait. Then he turn away."

She turned heavily back into the house.

Ignoring school — she had now been absent two consecutive days from that depleted institution — she grimly resolved to attend to her own concerns. Miss Hope, of course, would not fail to take note of this defection, but Julie, bitter over the careless methods of the Department which had helped to bring about this débâcle, was reckless of consequences.

First of all there was Purcell! She meant to tackle him single-handed. Indeed there was no one that she could think of from whom she could have derived support in this situation. If she had been a man she might have knocked him down and settled the issue at once. She wanted, she thought, to do something inexpressibly violent to him.

She was brushing out her hair before putting it up to go out, when a shadow loomed in the doorway. There stood Nemecia Victoria swaying like a purple passion flower.

Usually Nemecia was clothed in silken variations of the spectrum, with cob-web laces across her bosom. To-day with a winding-cloth bound round the body, her beautiful bronze limbs bared, she looked like a statue.

Nemecia crossed the room. She took the silvery coif of Julie's hair in her hands and caressed it. "My poor Señorita, with hair like this, to live so meanly — at the mercy of men!"

An acute curiosity shot through Julie. This was the Nemecia who knew the secret hearts of men. Just whose secrets? A temptation came to her to get Nemecia to speak. But no, she would not lift that curtain.

"You wouldn't live as I live?" Julie queried.

"My mother did; she worked always," Nemecia brooded. "Her body grew to be all bones. Then she was stolen by the Moros — to be a slave, till she died. When the pirates came I hid in a hole in the ground. They took my brother too."

Her voice commenced to choke. She broke off harshly. "Señorita, have you heard the evil *that* man says of you?"

She lifted up her arms, beautiful soft arms, hardening as they rose with a fury of passion that for the moment seemed to eclipse the great golden calm of the morning world.

"Men I have known many, but that white one is a devil! I ha-a-te him, and since I am afraid Hell will not get him — I shall kill him!"

To Julie's dumfounded amazement she drew from her bosom a long, thin, cruel strip of a blade and held it in her clenched fist before her contorted face.

Julie knew these people too well to be panic-stricken.

"Put it away, Nemecia!" she ordered. "They would put you in the calaboose and keep you there till you died, an old, old woman."

Nemecia's great eyes flashed fire. "Are you then cool over the things he said of you all over the village? Will you allow him to insult you to the world, you who brought about peace for Nahal? He seeks to ruin you, as he sought to torture me. Let me go for us both," she whispered tensely, "to-night, to the hammock in the gallery—and when he sleeps—give two quick blows, one for you and the other for me!"

"Alas, Nemecia, the calaboose is dark and cold. In your little cell of stone by yourself forever, you would never see the sun. You love the sun, Nemecia. You love the praise of your pretty face. No one would ever listen to the music of your ear hoops again. Just stillness and dark, forever, as if you had died and hung by your hair in space!

"Come!" she seized Nemecia's arm, and the knife went clattering to the floor. Julie's eyes shone with pleading. "Do this for me, Nemecia! Let him go! Ah! What a wonderful revenge! To hold the option of one's enemy's life in one's hand—and to toss it back to him. Give me that power, Nemecia! Give me that strength!"

Nemecia sulkily picked up the knife. Then she stood erect facing Julie. "My people owe you a debt which they have forgotten. Take then as my share of it, this creature's life, for,"—in a fresh flare—"I meant surely to kill him this very night!"

She turned indifferently out of the door.

Julie waited till she was out of sight. "I can go to him now!" she cried to herself. She started forth

for the Palacio. Fortunately it was an hour when there would be many people in the building.

There were two Filipino clerks in the office with Purcell. Julie advanced, with head uplifted, to the desk where he sat. He looked at her an instant and in the flash of his expression, Julie saw how thoroughly he knew he had done his work.

"I've come to pay you back your money!" She handed him several checks. "You will please cash these. And you will give me a receipt."

The note of calm authority in her tone clearly puzzled him. He busied himself in a slight confusion with the safe.

The transaction finished, Julie's spirits rose. There were dangerous lights playing in her green eyes. "You have said some unspeakable things about me, things that you knew to be utterly false! You are a liar, of course, and you believe me incapable of defending myself. In this country too, where as you know," she looked at him steadily, "one can so cheaply buy one's revenge."

Purcell paled. She saw he had understood.

"I did not expect my remarks to be repeated broadcast. You did borrow money from me—and as you must be well aware, the right sort of women do not resort to such expedients."

The girl looked hard at him and at the thought he read in her mind, a painful dark red dyed his face.

"Who is to blame for all this?" he exclaimed in a hoarse voice. "If you had taken me, I would have stuck to you through thick and thin. I wouldn't have cast you off like your friend Calmiden. He never intended to marry you. You must know that. Didn't I warn you long ago?"

"And you saw to it that your evil prophecies came true. You have hurt me in every way possible."

She turned and started to go.

Suddenly she felt that he had pressed up behind her.

"If you'll still say it isn't too late — I'll —"

Julie wrenched herself out of his detaining grasp. "You'll — What will you do?" she cried, turning savagely on him. "Having deliberately ruined the whole compass of my life and brought to pass the worst that was humanly possible, you still dare to think you have power over my life? Listen to me! I have power over your life — at any moment. I held it on the tip of my finger this morning, and balanced it there — and if you lift your hand against me again —" She stopped in a wild sob and ran from the room.

When she got to school, she found five boys huddled together awaiting her, gathered thither by the faithful Delphine, who had gathered them up outlaw fashion from the streets, and who was now oratorically instructing them from the platform. Delphine announced to her that the present gathering was the very best he could do, for — though he had lain in wait for the former scholars from dawn — they contrived to get down to the river, and from its inaccessible depths had defied him, their heads bobbing along the surface like grimacing corks.

James, too, was furious and had been twice to see the Padre, who had retreated to the sanctity of his lofty and impregnable *convento* to avoid the emissary of education.

"I'm going to climb the bell tower and beat him," James declared in heat, "if he doesn't call off this boycott."

Purcell's rumors, monstrously exaggerated and em-

broidered upon, had swept through the village. Public opinion had pronounced judgment in these empty rooms. In desperation, Julie went to the Major. He had heard the reports, and as he had a particular sensibility for Julie, who had been the means of cutting the Gordian Knot of his military career, he offered to give Purcell a piece of his mind. It was an extremely delicate thing for him to undertake; for, since Purcell was actually the chief civil functionary on the island, it was the Major's duty to remain on good terms with him.

Julie found in these trying moments that she had misjudged this man who towered in his rigid rectitude of character over the life of the colony. He was stern military metal, but every atom of that metal rang true.

He assured Julie that the Americans understood the unfortunate affair. The Filipino conception of it apparently did not trouble his mind. The Padre to his deep regret was outside his jurisdiction.

The women of the colony defended Julie, as women if left to themselves generally will defend their kind. One day when Julie was passing Mrs. Smith's house, the little lady called out to her to come in. After the girl had sunk dispiritedly into a cane chair, Mrs. Smith broke out: "Julie, you're taking this wretched business too much to heart! Do you for one instant think that we who know you would believe a thing against you? Marlborough was at the Mess that day when all that trouble rose and heard what passed — something about your having been engaged to Adams, and your letting all the men kiss you. How many" — turning into a tone of playful curiosity — "did, really? How fearfully interesting, you little philanderer! I — there were a number in my history too. Just heaps of 'em, in

fact. Why shouldn't there be, when we're making the Sentimental Journey of youth? These stupid men! They think they are the only ones who can take the trip!

"What made Calmiden mad, of course, was your being engaged to Adams, his class-mate, all the time you let him make love to you. That was playing the game rather roughly, I admit!"

Julie explained wearily the embroilment about Adams. "He came down here because he was lonely — and to see me, because, well, maybe I was a sort of romantic ideal to him — who will ever know? We had made a contract to help each other through — quite different, you understand, from the other kind of contract."

"Does Calmiden know about this?"

Julie listlessly shook her head.

"But perhaps that's just what's the trouble! What would you have done if you thought he were untrue? He has, moreover, a peculiar character, as you know."

"Untrue? He is completely so!"

"What on earth has Calmiden done?"

"What has he done?" Julie cried trembling. "Didn't your husband tell you the horrible things Purcell said against me — my character, my integrity, shamelessly pulled apart before the whole mess?"

"Purcell did not make any serious attack upon your character while my husband was present. He spoke, as I have said, of your engagement to Adams, and of the fact that he had seen Adams kiss you — and some others, I believe. What he said afterwards, Marlborough did not hear, for, not finding the conversation to his taste, he got up and left, and so did Calmiden!"

"Kenneth?" Julie cried wildly.

"Yes, he left the room, Marlborough said, white with rage. He was furious at your double play."

"But Dwight said that Kenneth was there — and took no part."

"Who was following anybody's movements after such a disclosure? Don't you see, nobody had dreamed that Adams had come to Guindulman! And when you know Dwightie as well as I do, you'll discover that he never sees anything clearly, poor dear, when he gets excited. Marlborough says that when Purcell announced that the Major had told him that you were engaged to Jack Adams and that that was why he set out on his disastrous adventure, everything was in excitement, and Calmiden rose straight off and left. Perhaps he should have said something when Purcell spoke of your universal flirting — he made a mistake there, but he was shocked and angry.

"There, I've handed you back a new lease of life, I see. Go immediately and make your peace with Kenneth. Good-by!"

Julie never knew how she got across the parade ground; it seemed as if on wings. The blood was spinning in her head. Once home she sat down and composed a letter, of a kind that never in all her life was she able to write again. It was written under the spur of renewed belief in the universe. Until this wrong was righted the universe could not properly balance, and not an instant must be lost in setting it right.

In this letter, Julie endeavored to make Calmiden understand that there was nothing she would not do to show how fearfully sorry she was.

She made a full and free explanation concerning

Adams. Very urgently she tried to initiate Calmiden into the delicately intangible bond that had existed between them. She explained that the disastrous first letter had been written in one of her fatally uncontrollable impulses, prompted by circumstances which at the time had distorted her view. She would reveal those conditions when he came to her, which she begged him to do at once.

Nothing could have been more consummately abject than this letter. Julia again dispatched Delphine to Calmiden, with the strictest injunctions for a swift return with the answer.

At last the swift soft pad of Delphine's feet in the dust of the road! Then in another moment, breathing hard, for he had sensed the super-importance of the errand and had flown through the streets, the lad laid the envelope in her hand. Her name was inscribed on it in Calmiden's handwriting.

Julie tore it open. Short, like a telegram, it burned through her brain. "I can not come, now. Sometime you will hear from me."

That was all. A masterpiece of the enigmatic, meaning anything or nothing at all. Julie sat down and studied it out for a shred of hope or help it might contain; but at last, with tears of loneliness and despair in her throat, she gave it up. Calmiden did not mean to come back. Of that she was now convinced. She had injured him, and he had told her over and over with unmistakable directness that he did not forgive. From him this answer was inevitable. There was no appeal from it. Not even her letter had weighed in the issue.

Time went mercilessly on. The term was drawing towards its end. There were now only two pupils

left in her once ardently conceived shrine of uplift. One of these was of course Delphine — the other an undersized youth who found it completely impossible to escape him.

She wondered how she had managed to be so happy once; or so independent in her aims. Those aims had now become almost obscured. One can't go on greatly believing when the edifices one has sought to raise to the gods are smitten by lightning. Julie's once fervid spirit was becoming becalmed. She couldn't understand anything at all — a dark veil seemed to be stretched before her eyes. She longed, and yet dreaded to get off the stage of this drama.

The bachelors had moved their establishment down the hill, to the very house that Julie upon her introduction to Nahal had occupied. The Plaza had become too congested, and the Reyes had rented their house to the Military Government. Julie did not see Calmiden; he contrived absolutely to keep out of her way.

Finally they passed each other one day on the street. Julie turned white, and a spasm crossed Calmiden's grim, gray face. As their eyes met, her blood congealed. For out of this brooding face nothing of the old Kenneth looked. One hard passion had conquered that face and turned it to stone. Right there the truth that she had paradoxically refused to receive stared her in the eyes.

He did not speak, and neither did she. A ghastly encounter — the meeting of their dead selves! Frightened and hopeless, Julie hurried on when she saw that Calmiden was to make no sign. He had closed definitely his strange soul.

Julie's reason was beginning to point out inexorably

that Calmiden was a great deal more to blame than she had thought. The questionableness of his permitting Purcell to say in his presence anything whatever about her — however shattering to his personal romance, or of his allowing his anger and outraged pride to get the better of him before he had demanded an explanation of her, had not at all balanced, in his mind, the fact that in her blistering letter she had told him that he was the worst possible conception of a cad. She knew that Calmiden had sought out the Treasurer, and that they had fought brutally in Purcell's quarters; but even there he had accorded her enemy, however violently, the chance for a vindication that he would not give her. Also she knew that, although he had fought her accuser, belatedly, he still believed secretly a great deal of what that accuser had had to say.

He had caused her to suffer a great deal. He had brutally broken her pride, and had done it wilfully, hoping to make her contemptible to herself. It came over her in a great moment of proud anger and relief that she had never actually cared for him. He had succeeded in swerving her out of her path, he had quenched her torch, and helped to place her in the failure where she now found herself. Her soul, for a long time to come, would scorch with the hurts he and Nahal had inflicted.

In the bitter days that followed, the girl felt hideously lonely and abandoned. A sense of disgrace scorched her isolation. People believed wicked, abominable things of her, and there was no way to change their minds. The friend upon whose loyalty she had most depended had under the severest conditions deserted. She cried a great deal at night, till one day a letter came that brought a rebound.

For a minute or two it seemed hard to believe the reality of this message. It read:

"Your friends, the Calixters, have left the Islands. He was offered something better at home, and her health had failed.

"She didn't have time to write you, but she did tell me what those people down there were trying to do to you. It is not my custom ever to stand by and see my friends hurt.

"Father Hull and I are arranging your transfer to Manila. I beg you not to remain an hour longer in that awful spot.

"Father Hull will meet you when you come north — as I am now leaving for China. I cannot say when I shall be back, but I shall certainly see you again. Until then —

"BARRY MCCORD."

"Would he indeed come back!" Julie recalled what Mrs. Calixter had said: "Each time he goes he says he may not."

There was another letter from Manila — from Isabel Armistead:

"I saw the Calixters before they sailed. They said you were about to come north, out of your hermit wilds; and they intimated that things had not gone well with you. How could they indeed! The Green God and I are still your friends. We will show you a better fortune than you have ever found before. •

"I may be off on a journey when you arrive, but until my return you are to make yourself completely at home in my house."

The time came for Julie to put in her application for transportation to Solano, where she would catch a boat for Manila. Calmiden being Quartermaster, her application passed through his hands, and came back to her signed by him. She stared grimly at his signature.

That same afternoon she met Mrs. Smith on a corner. "Have you heard the news?" that lady exclaimed. "The Treasurer has been dismissed, and is ordered to turn over his office and leave at once. Julie," she asked whimsically, "where is your pull?"

Julie shrugged her shoulders negatively.

"You can't think? How about that man in Manila who was so glad to hear about you again? Couldn't he do almost anything?"

Julie's eyes opened. She had written to Mrs. Calixter and recounted her troubles. Could that have been what Barry meant?

On that last day when she stood in the school which had once been the temple of her faith, one solitary boy faced her, struggling with his tears — the loyal Delphine.

"*Maestra*, take me with you!" he chokingly pleaded, clinging to her skirts in appeal. The girl and the little brown boy clung to each other weeping.

After leaving the school, she went to a spot outside the village and gathered some flowers. She had made few farewells, but there was one person to whom she must bid a positive good-by. It was a shining morning. On just such a one had she embarked upon the renaissance of Nahal.

The cemetery, as she entered it, was very still. Nobody ever appeared to visit it, yet Adams's grave had

a fresh look that startled Julie. It was as if he had not completely given up his hold on life; as if he were vaguely in part still present. Somewhere down there she might reach the heart of a friend — a friend who had passed through the limits of human tragedy.

It was the kiss he had given her that had really put her disaster in motion; but it rose at this moment before her as the cementing seal of a friendship of high deeds.

For a long time Julie sat over the grave, insensible to everything but this sad communion. The sun, merciless creator, flung upon the world the compulsion of his quickening rays, ruthlessly enforcing the fiat of life. All the burning force of existence seemed to be beating down upon her bared head like an intolerable weight; but she heeded it not. To be human, and to be the plaything of unassailable forces; to aspire, and to be defeated; to reach up like Prometheus for the fire of Heaven, only to be dashed to pieces on the ground! In a paroxysm, Julie flung her head down upon the grave. There was nothing in the universe to answer anything!

When she lifted herself up a queer numbness had attacked her limbs. Forked lightning seemed to be piercing her brain. Holding to her head, as if there were a rift in it, she staggered out of the cemetery. She was in the acutest pain. But beneath it, conquering each convulsion was the indomitable resolve to leave Nahal. To-day she should go out of this island forever!

From the wharf a row boat was to take her to the steamer out in the bay. The vessel was to leave at two o'clock, the siesta hour. The Major, with Mike

scuffling along behind on a chain like an imp, escorted her to the wharf. Almost blinded she got down the hill.

The Major seemed to be much moved, and unable to find words that would put his feeling into expression. "It will be a long time hence perhaps before you will reap any reward for what you've done," he said. "I myself am under an undying obligation to you, and while my appreciation is not much—" he stopped, and studied her face. "Go home, my child," he urged. "Don't let the East crucify you!"

Julie shook the hand of the fine old soldier, and walked down the wharf. There, a brand new *camisa* on his back, and the smallest conceivable bundle in his hand, was Delphine.

"I go with you," he announced in a transport of determination. "My uncle—he give me away, with the new shirt."

Even Balthazar was not missing! With his halter around his neck, he was hanging investigatorily over the wharf by what appeared to be the nub of his tail.

Delphine thrust into Julie's hand a crumpled sheet of paper written over in very bad Spanish, and signed unmistakably by Pedro Bepong. In this document he ceded over the body and soul of one Delphine.

The children of the East—bartered, sold, drowned by guardians who were unable to cope with existence! Julie's heart had often ached over the valuelessness of their poor little lives. It was for all these poor crushed creatures that she had come overseas to offer her life.

But she was having much too desperate a time making her own way through this new world to become responsible for another creature. Besides, she had had

one wormwood lesson in adoption. She gently shook her head.

The boy began to cry wildly, in an abandonment of despair. The tears ran down the quaint little corsair face. The poor little starched *camisa*, which had stuck out stiffly like armor in which to encounter the world, fell limp under the rain. Even the little bare feet had their appeal. They were willing to trudge the world over to find a future.

The Fiscal came down to the wharf on business. Delphine appealed his case to him, crying and clinging to his coat. The Fiscal said that the note transferring Delphine was perfectly genuine and authentic; that the boy's aunt and uncle found great difficulty in feeding their own brood, and that if the boy did not go with the Maestra, he would be apprenticed to a Chinaman who kept a tin-shop.

Into that den of filth and idolatry would go everything that Julie had planted in the best of her boys. Did Delphine, frantically pleading, dancing about in his grotesque little *camisa*, and weeping terribly all over his droll face, dream anywhere in him of saving any of those things?

Julie stood silent. Balthazar, emerging from under the side of the wharf, scrambled towards her, and gave angry pecks at her shoe.

"The boy is dissatisfied with Nahal," the Fiscal said. "Now that the yeast is in him, he wishes to rise. I was that way once; but a man, as you know, Maestra, cannot push through a wall. Take him, if you can. Do not leave his soul to die."

Julie gazed at the boy clutching now at her skirts. As she gazed down into his face, the revelation came to her. Down there before her, electing to follow

her wherever she went, the new generation knelt. Whatever the past and the East stood for, the new generation had cast the ballot for her and the light. Defeat was turned into victory — a victory that would grow and become universal. In the face pleading up at her, she saw the curtain of darkness rent.

“Come, Delphine!” she said.

From the deck she watched the island recede, beautiful and paradisiac as it had first looked. The scent of its golden flowers drifted out upon the water. Quiet, green, and sun-touched, the island drifted off like a dream.

CHAPTER XIV

JULIE was entering again the Arabian Nights' city. It lay emblazoned in the light of a blood red torrid sun fast sinking behind a towering mountain that uprose out of wide stretching plains already shadowy under the first sprinkling of dusk. Through the streets of the City, the many races of the earth were moving in slow crooked currents. Back in the charmed City to stay! Back in the midst of the Empire-builders and the destiny of the enigmatic East!

Julie expected to go to one of the hostelries of the City. There were a number of them, of which the Oriente was by far the best known and most brilliant. It harbored under its palmy roof people from all corners of the world, and was the stage for a great deal of the drama of the East. There were Australians and New Zealanders, come up to see what the Americans were making of things and to have a bit of fun nearer than Europe; Hindoo rajahs with their trains, who had unaccountably found their way here; Chinese and Japanese officials bound, in silence, on their inconjectural errands. Manila was glitteringly cosmopolitan. It was just now attracting the eye of all the East, and picturesque people coursed in and out of it like a strange spice. Almost all of this throng found refuge in the Oriente. Not foreigners alone made lively this resort. There was the City's own strange population; and exiles from the *bosque* were there seeking nepenthe for their souls in the dancing and

music of its plaza, in its life and love. No old colonial of to-day can pass the still gates of this closed pavilion of pleasure without a pang for the vivid era of the past.

But this glittering khan Julie would be forced to pass by. Aside from the prices, high in those prodigal days of the Empire, the great hostelry, while respectable, held a much too vivid representation of Anglo-Asian life for a solitary girl.

The ship was wharfing. Julie perceived a conspicuous equipage waiting on the pier. Beside its white-liveried coachman sat an unbelievably small figure which was turning its strange miniature individuality about on the box. Isabel's queer dwarf! He must have seen Julie, for in an instant he was burrowing his way through the travelers. Soon he was standing before her, extending a letter and nodding his uncanny little face up at her.

The note was from Isabel. She had written it just before setting out on some enterprise, and as she had intimated before would not be at home to receive Julie; but she had made all arrangements for Julie to remain in her house.

The dwarf gesticulated towards the carriage with one of his elfin hands. Delphine looking about him at all the wonder uttered an exclamation. The dwarf, glancing at him quickly, spoke to him in the same dialect. They began to chatter to each other.

The mannikin, Delphine excitedly informed Julie, had been born on the Island of Nahal.

The village of Guindulman — did they know it? the dwarf asked. Julie told him that she had lived there for some time. It was from there that he had been stolen as a child, and made a slave.

Guindulman remained as a bright spot in his memory; his little nut of a face transformed under the glow of reminiscences.

He and his mother and his sister had all been scattered in the raid of a band of Moros, and he had never seen either of them again.

A recollection seized on Julie. "What was your sister's name?"

"Nemecia Victoria — she was a child."

"Oh!" Delphine joyously put in, "she is there now — a pretty lady; and very rich — with so many friends!"

Julie gave Delphine an arresting look.

The dwarf trembled a little. "My sister is alive! — and well off!" he murmured.

"Yes," Julie replied. To her relief, he did not ask any more questions.

"Will you then go back to her?"

The dwarf turned away. "What is to be, will be. I have been everywhere with my mistress — even to England. I will not leave —" he muttered to himself.

Julie drew Delphine aside, and cautioned him what he should say of Nemecia. Delphine listened attentively under the shadow of a dreadfully civilized little derby hat, which had evidently accompanied the new *camisa*, and demanded permission to tell his new friend of the Peace that had come about in Nahal and of the part his Maestra and Nemecia had played in it.

Julie sat back comfortably in the carriage, with a feeling of gratitude toward Isabel. The hotels other than the Oriente were neither good nor picturesque, and from one of these Isabel had saved her. Her reflections were cut short by the sight of an urgent face making its way toward her through the crowd —

though it was not until a black habit appeared in conjunction with the face that Julie recognized the painfully emaciated features of Father Hull.

"I'm late!" he exclaimed, extending his hand to her, and taking in the carriage with a dissatisfied glance. "They misinformed me at the steamship office as to the arrival of the boat.

"I had a *carromata* waiting for you," he suggested. "I have also made arrangements with some Spanish-Mestizo friends of mine for your lodging. Suitable accommodations are always hard to procure in Manila, and I strongly advise you to take advantage of this opportunity — especially as it is in the district to which you will probably be assigned.

"Unfortunately," he added, knitting his brows at the carriage, "the Reredos are not immediately prepared — and an unprepared Spaniard is a serious thing. One cannot walk in and out of their households after the fashion we have at home. They lack the quality of casualness.

"In the meantime, I know of a very good hotel where you can pass a few days at a very reasonable rate."

Julie informed him that the carriage she was in belonged to Mrs. Armistead, a friend of hers, who had invited her to remain in her house till its owner returned from a trip. She believed it would be ungracious not to accept the hospitality offered. Part of her baggage, moreover, was installed in the carriage, and arrangements made for the rest of it. Privately Julie had no desire to go to a cheap hotel when a chance at that wonderful house was offered.

The priest appeared to consider, in troubled thought. Rather reluctantly, Julie thought, he consented to the

arrangement. He said he would communicate later with her concerning the school. Then he lifted his hat and moved away.

Julie had wanted to ask him about Barry, but had not found the opportunity.

As the carriage drove away, the dwarf and Delphine — who was clutching Balthazar, too stupefied from the trip to be troublesome — sat close together, talking rapidly. The dwarf occasionally stole a shyly appreciative glance at Julie.

Julie passed across the city, coursing through its dusky streets, in a mood of subtle excitement. Everywhere she was met by the Change! Not a change that assailed the physical senses, but one that transcended them: a subtle, widespread intimation that quivered on some inner receptivity. Not the altered streets, the new buildings, the material renovation, gave it forth so much as the peculiar quickening of the atmosphere through which the soul of these people seemed to suspire. How can one trace the leaven in the bread or follow through the far filaments of thought a psychic metamorphosis? Yet there it was. The very stones of the pavement proclaimed it. The Resurrection was stirring through the worn kingdoms of men, and the blood of the Builders coursed beneath it all like the rivers of life!

Every moment Julie thrilled deeply to what she saw. The Builders were beginning to fulfil. Here in this single corner the stagnant spirit of the East was awaking to life. Wars might be fought in the future, and races degraded and aggrandized, but the spreading influences of this endeavor would reach far into the future of men.

Again she found herself in that perfumed garden

before the sweep of Babylonian pillars with the shimmering palace lifting like a jeweled Taj Mahal out of the mystery of the thick, soft night — and the giant trees and scented shadows, and the bamboo chanting to the forthcoming stars. The mansion of the Caliph!

She stepped softly up the flights of stairs into the great lengths of chambers, glowing under dim lights with the rich acquisitions of strange lands. The house was all sheer beauty, exquisitely compiled. The river came up to the verdant banks on its rear. Mystical, shadow-banked, it set the senses quivering. The surroundings stirred Julie like the confused beauty of Eastern music, and brought up dim, poetic suggestions of Queens of Sheba and Scheherezades and the unending dynasties of kings — of the poetry and the romance of old, unchanging things.

She ate her dinner, a solitary figure, at a huge banquet table of shining *nara* set forth with Indian silver, delicately carved with the loves and conquests of maharajahs and goddesses. After dinner, she wandered about fascinated. What a triumph Isabel had made of the house. What a marvelous woman, indeed, she was!

She stopped short in a chamber of shining carvings, slow wrought wonders of a land where hands were cheaper than tools, and life was the cheapest of all. From the midst of the labor of these unvalued hands, she caught the glimmer of a strange little figure with bent head, shining stilly out of the dusk. The Green God! Beautiful, terrible, Lord of the Eastern universe — to whom myriads of souls were fastened in supreme faith. With what awful power he was invested by their belief! She had walked upon him unawares, and now hurried to get away.

As she emerged disquieted into the main sala, a head thrust itself softly, like a projected shadow, above the old Spanish balustrade of the stairs. The body did not appear and the head paused only long enough to startle Julie. A dark, aged human vision. In the fleeting look she could not tell whether it was the face of a man or a woman; but there had been a flash from the depths of that being that had frightened the girl. It was gone, and she calmed again. After all, in the East, all sorts of unexpected faces peer at one from odd corners.

Later Julie tried to question the dwarf. Who was the old being she had seen? Did it pop in and out of people's houses at will? Did his Mistress know anything about her? Dicky-Dicky, the dwarf, looked at her with inscrutable eyes, and knew nothing. Julie decided to say no more about it.

The next day Isabel appeared. Vividly beautiful like some bright houri, she came smiling to the gallery where Julie was sitting. "I am happy to see that you have found your way back to us!" She kissed Julie with her perfumed lips. Then she stood back and regarded her. "Ah, my poor little friend, you *have* changed! A hard time is written all over you, and you are too thin for your clothes. Poor little dust-covered Atlas! Tell me about it. I love all brave journeys. But first we will have lunch. I am starved. I have had a long trip."

"From your letter, I thought you would be gone longer."

"I have been off on a secret glorious errand to a place of which you shall never dream. You would have to have the East in you for that. I have been building paradise to suit myself, bit by bit. The kind

of paradise you think of is made for every one, for all sorts of people you couldn't get along with on earth — so why, I ask, repeat the experiment in the courts of God?

"Nor is paradise for one alone, my friend. It is for the comrades of our souls, scattered sometimes as far as the ends of the rainbow. There are a few golden beings that in some eternal citadel we should hold fast. Do you think —" she exclaimed suddenly — "that if I climbed to the arch of Heaven by my nails I could capture the one great friend of my soul?"

Her tone changed. "I came back. I hungered for Manila. It holds the world for me."

"It is Scheherezade's city — full of wonderful adventures!" Julie declared with shining eyes. "I wonder," she mused, "what it holds for me?"

They seated themselves at the table before golden iced mangoes. The huge silver bowl in the center was loaded with great scarlet blossoms whose perfume saturated the air. They seemed to faint under their own fragrance, for Julie observed that while dewily fresh at the commencement of the meal, they were all but dead at the close.

"Nothing here lives an hour after you pick it," Isabel dissatisfiedly remarked. "But the quick new buds replace the blossoms almost in a breath. I am glad I have no children, to crowd me out. I like the flowers of Europe. You can wear them all day and then keep them on in water. Life is longer over there. Here we have only our hour. But such an hour! Take you and me at thirty-five! You will be young — a cold storage sort of youth — and I, well, it is written in the stars and the heart of the Green God where I shall be — but I shall have lived,

oh, very splendidly little Atlas, while you will only have drawn breath."

After luncheon she put on a *négligé* of lustrous silk and flung herself on a couch, her splendid black Malay hair loosened about her, a cigarette in her lips.

"There is a water carnival at the Palace to-morrow night, and the question of your costume must be settled at once. It is late, and all the tailors are over-crowded with orders. I am afraid too that I may not be able to get you into a boat. I might take you in my float, but that would necessitate darkening you up, and it would not do to obscure your little ray of light.

"You might be gotten up as Saturn, with filmy rings. But the *nebulæ* would prevent you from dancing. I have it! You shall be a Pleiad. I have seen a picture of them leaning over the edge of the world, out of the mists of the sky, and you look like that! You can be a Pleiad quite conveniently, too, with folds of moonlight mist, some sandals, and a star. It only involves buying a roll of gauze from an East Indian. I have a star among my things, and we can find some sandals.

"And now —" she urged, laying lightly compelling fingers on Julie's arm, "tell me about it! Tell me everything that took place down there — and afterwards, forget it forever. There are no memories in Scheherezade's city."

This was Julie's first opportunity to unburden her soul, and she was still surcharged with what had happened. Some one else might be able to understand; some one else might be able to make things clear. So under the stimulus of Isabel's fragrant liqueur her innermost amazements and hurts burst into speech.

Isabel's blue eyes lost their dreamy expression, and

came acutely awake, her cigarette burned unheeded, while Julie's sorrows, perplexities, and final confoundment of soul passed in array before her. When the girl had finished and had sunk back into the old stupid questioning wonder, Isabel exclaimed:

"Great is the Green God! Never say he is not kind. Surely he led you out of it. Don't regret the stone image that let you starve under its eyes! There was more to come, little Atlas. You have something different in you — something very nearly divine. I feel it at my finger's ends; though I don't want it to come any nearer than that poetical distance. It is bringing you some place, and it was not meant that your destiny should halt where you perhaps believe it should. I am a prophet, you see. If I were not Empress of the East, as they say, I should travel as a prophetess through the land — like my mother. You have heard of her — how she gave up her wealth to wander and foretell? She too dreams of the Victorious East."

Julie regarded this magnificence of mood with wonder. All manner of men, it was said, had loved Isabel; and in some peculiar way their lives had seemed to be bound up in her colorful personality — as if her sphinx-like spirit had devoured and assimilated their souls. Her mood was always an extravagant expectation of more than could be reasonably aspired to by any one person.

"Ah, what do you know about men?" Isabel suddenly exclaimed. "To hear you is like listening to the forgotten primer of one's childhood. Nevertheless, there was long ago just such another as yourself, one as piteously credulous and blind."

Suddenly an alien Isabel rose before the girl, an

apparition of which the suppressed terribleness frightened her as if some strange phoenix had risen from its ashes before her eyes.

"You have told me your story. Now I shall tell you one of mine — a buried story of my old, old self. There are perhaps many turns yet in the course, but long after I shall have forgotten everything else, this one memory somehow shall remain.

"Maybe I had the promise of a soul then. I was a little Eurasian, with the happy blood of both races charging gayly through my veins. And I *believed* tremendously, Atlas, just like you. Ah — !

"I was born in this house of my ancestors. My father was a Scotchman, of their best clan; my mother was of the East. All its bloods flowed in her veins. I was taken young to England — and there," Isabel said slowly, "my mother disappeared. I came to love my father's land. I went to the schools there, and dreamed great things. Sometime I too should play a fine part in the world. Every man, I thought, had his destiny in his own hands.

"It was all a long time ago. Of the seasons I remember vividly only the time when the primroses open and the English hedge-lark is aboard." A fierce blue mist veiled the flashing eyes. "Life dies and resurrects itself in England. Every year one is born anew.

"The man was an officer in an English regiment — fair as the daylight. On my knees I used to worship him as a god. Nobody suspected what I was, and I did not myself understand. He loved me, too — with the kind of love the English understand. No fire, no poetry in it — the love that is just strong

enough to manufacture a few pink-cheeked children for their tidy British homes. I loved him as we of the East know how to love.

"In Europe one marries not merely a man, but a family. How different from my mother's land, where mates find each other under the sun! Yet they call it civilization over there. Well, his family grew suspicious. They had heard tales of my father's wild youth in strange parts of the world. It sometimes happens that one must pay a very heavy price for one's father's youth.

"The only retort my father could make was a bigger dowry. But I was different. I had then sublime ideas of honesty of soul. My lover, I believed, would love me the more exaltedly for them. I acknowledged my Malay blood — all the bloods of the East that ran through me. I stood up against the wall and did it in a great splendor of mood.

"Ah! You know the rest. When they, when he — that European matrimonial compound threw me off, I did everything that a woman of your race would not have done. I threw myself in his path at every turn — offered myself to him on any terms; for I knew now that never could I exact terms at all.

"And he took me on the lowest. West — East; it is always the same. He got himself ordered to India. That last night!" Isabel sat up straight. "I crept along the brush of the lane into which he was to turn. An Igorotte from the Mountains had taught me how to catch my foe. I slid out when he came! I would have killed him, but the knife was poor. I only wounded him. I had meant to kill us both, but —" Isabel nonchalantly threw open the *négligé*, and exposed a large scar — "we go on, do we not, Green

God of the Universe?" She turned her head toward the room where the preposterous idol lived.

To this narrative, told with oriental fervor, of things quite as beyond her experience of existence as the pits of Erebus, Julie had listened in a conflict of emotions.

"The priest will tell you many things about me — among them that a young man killed himself here for me not long ago. Men may have killed themselves because of me, but not Grahaeme. He killed himself, not because he was in love with me, but because he couldn't alter the universe to an Englishman's idea — because I was what I shall eternally remain — an Eurasian, a mongrel! You see, your Englishman can gloriously destroy himself, but he can't sacrifice his caste. Grahaeme was jaded by the East, and he took me to die for. I would never again accept low terms. A Ghengis Khan, perhaps — or —" She stopped short. "Yes, I will be unchangeably *I*, till the end. It is so decreed. There is something about you, though, that stirs me, and makes me wish that one died like the English summer and came up anew with the spring."

Julie rose, and in a surge of feeling looked down upon the recumbent figure. For a bare moment Isabel had opened the very secret gate and let her glimpse in. The girl laid her hand on the olive shoulder.

"Those things — make no difference to me," she said diffidently. "We will always be friends."

Isabel glanced up at her ironically. "Is that a covenant? Go away, little friend, with your spring insistence! There is no resurrection here. And Europe shall never see me again! Once I wrote quaint lyrics, full, they said, of the magic and mystery of the East; now I am preparing a volume that is not writ-

ten on pages — of things that must shortly stir the race of men. 'Waters dried up that the way of the Kings of the East shall be prepared!' Alpha and Omega. Here the struggle of man began, and here it will end! And 'he who shall come, taking the peace from the earth, and making kings'! Great resurrected Ghengis Khan! Where is he? In what recess of Asia is he making ready to sweep the East to victory? Him my soul awaits. He will put the sun and moon under my feet!

"Half of this world will not sleep forever. The sleepers of the East will touch their bonds and find them rotten — the senile hold of their foreign masters! Then there shall be such a conflagration as will scatter the very stars."

Isabel coming suddenly back from her feverish flight, looked up at Julie. "Are you ill?" she demanded.

Julie put her hands to her head and pressed it hard, her lids drawing together with pain. "I had a sun-stroke in Nahal, and ever since I've had a headache. Sometimes it aches as if it would split my brain."

Isabel pointed to the adjoining room. "Go and lie down! When you get up the sunlight will be dimmed, and you will be better."

Julie dropped down on a bed that was a mass of crawling teakwood dragons. All over the walls, from queer prints etched as with a single hair, gazed fantastic human apparitions wearing their limbs and features in most extraordinary ways, all supremely triumphant over space and perspective. Draperies of embroidered landscapes, fine as old etchings, disclosed temples of woven gold, rivers as fantastic as dreams,

and blue mountains over which the mysticism of the East hung like dew.

She drowsed, and presently the temples of gold threads expanded into pavilions like the markets she had seen in the city, and millions of people, thick as flies, passed in and out.

She awoke, and her eyes rested on Isabel, who had so agitated her brain with strange prophecies and visions. The long hair, black as the jungle at night, lay curved over her beautiful body; the blue eyes that judged etchings and old prints were closed, curtained by heavy lids. The soul seemed to be withdrawn to inaccessible retreats, afar off perhaps beating its wings against inexorable walls. Only the mask of the East looked out from the inert form. The Malay woman lay there asleep—the woman that could track her enemy, and kill.

CHAPTER XV

EARLY the next morning, Julie received a note from Father Hull, in which he informed her that her appointment to the Manila Department had been arranged. Only one vacancy had existed — in the Tondo district, a native section of the city. The Reredos, the prosperous mestizos who were to accommodate her, had a large house within easy distance of the school.

Isabel made a wry face over this prospect, and advised Julie to remain with her as long as possible. Julie had agreed to remain for the Carnival, but decided that she must go at once to investigate her new surroundings, and that she must establish herself there the following day.

Her salary, she learned, had not been increased, although this prospect had been held out to the teachers for the beginning of their second year of service. For a city like this, where high salaried officials set the standard of Americanism, her stipend was stupendously inadequate. Her financial affairs were in about the same unsatisfactory state as when they had caused the *dénouement* in Nahal. She had always to cripple herself by payments to Mrs. Morris, and there was now Delphine.

Isabel, however, entered into her perplexities to some purpose. She knew, she said, of a Spanish lawyer who wished to come abreast of the times by learning English. As Julie's school hours were from eight in the morning to one o'clock, she would have her

afternoon free to instruct Señor Sansillo, who was sure to pay well. He was, Isabel said, a pure-blooded Spaniard of culture, married to an enormously rich mestiza.

Julie set out after breakfast to examine the niche that had been made for her in the city.

Tondo, at the other side of Manila, was very ancient and wholly native. It was as flat and sun-bleached as a desert, and had for its horizon on one side the sea, prognosticative of typhoons; on the other a wall of high hills where the winds blew against heaven. On beyond was holy Arayat, lifting its solitary head into space, and holding, it was said, the Ark buried in its crypt forever beyond the reach of man. The people of Tondo lived in the very frankness of being. Up beyond the ridges were savages who had once been a serious menace to this part of the city, which lay outside the Christian walls. Julie came to believe that the soul of this section lay likewise beyond those Christian borders.

There was a green somnolent river crawling like a senile old serpent through the District. People swarmed its muddy banks, fishing in it, washing their bodies and their raiment in it, and scooping its awful water into drinking jars. So universal was its utility, it might have been the River of Life itself. Old stone bridges lent an undeserved dignity to the vile, green thing, which, set as it was into the core of the people's life, was bound to have its grain of the picturesque.

A few of the streets were broad and long, but packed with shops of tarnished brilliancy of color that looked like pigeon holes and illustrated all vocations from Abraham's time down to the present. These booths made the streets look like dingy fragments of some old

rainbow discarded out of the skies. From the robin's egg blue regions of an "Esquela de Baile," the abandoned notes of a Zingarella tinkled forth in defiance of the feverish heat of the day, as if its incantation would set the whole street to dancing like tarantulas.

The "Booth of Miraculous Refreshment" was yellow and blue, with orange colored festoons, and before its delapidated wooden tables its patrons imbibed its elixir without any special demonstration of exhilarance. In the "Peaceful Barberia" two natives were matching a pair of ferocious cocks. The "Patriotic Clam" offered ice-cream as the medium of its contact with the public. Next to the "Bar of the Orient," in suggestive proximity, was the "Resigned Funeria," done in apple-green and having on exhibition hosts of pink satin coffins drowned in lace.

However ignominiously born, the native gets even with the universe by going splendidly to his grave.

Beyond the row of Chinese rice shops, infants' baptismal robes in waves of purple and cerise ruffles smote the eye. The tiny, vivid gala company of elfin shells suggested the shapes of an unborn race about to enter the colorful, enigmatic destiny of the East.

One street was marvelous in the energy and variety of its human service. In a single square one could have one's teeth pulled by an experienced Japanese, one's voice trained, through heaven knows what agency of the East; one's toe nails pared, or one's self completely mesmerized by a thrillingly bearded Hindoo, whose placarded likeness gave forth sparks in every direction and guaranteed, in large print to all patrons absolute irresistibility in love.

Agipito, from environs of violently stained glass,

announced a "brokerage," and advertised pearls from the Sulu. The riches of the East passed across this pawn broker's palms. Perfecto Abbas was a lawyer. Access to his conference room was gained through a small swinging door, such as is characteristic of places of alcoholic refreshment, and which possibly was here employed to stimulate trade. Zee Woo, a *laven-dero* of the first class with his mouth as a sprinkler, was to be seen blowing water over the clothes he was ironing. There were Chinamen everywhere, like djinn in goblin depths, fingering abacuses, as if searching for the mystic equation of wealth.

The Street! The Street! Bartering and bargaining, following its oriental, alien and inconjecturable way. Birth is accidental, death inevitable, but the exchange of things that are mine and the things that are thine will go on to eternity.

The native of the East takes his entrance into the universe philosophically. He attaches to himself no importance and definitely expects little, except death. He has even a graceful way of meeting that. The native of the West refuses to allude to this common human casualty, of which he has a horror. The Filipino, on the other hand, nonchalantly displays and even takes pleasure in his colorful coffins, and when the time comes acquiescently sinks into them; for he knows that he is a poor creature with little to cling to, and he is humbly grateful for his day in the sun.

His intransitoriness of soul extends throughout his whole existence. He erects houses that the winds of the sea sweep away; he stores no treasure on earth; he lives from day to day. To-morrow is so inconceivable a mystery that he relegates to it everything that

he cannot comfortably compass to-day. By to-morrow he may have dropped gracefully, unresistingly out of the problems of the world. As a race he appears to cherish no ambition of permanency on the globe. Idling in his shops, he wonderingly watches the gnarled Chinese water-carrier go by, bowed under his load. It does not occur to him that the Chinaman bites the dust, that his sons and his sons' sons may survive.

It was into this existence that Julie was coming to dwell.

The long street thinned out, fields intervened. Finally Julie saw a house sitting back isolated among a great deal of foliage near a bridge. It was of the old Spanish type and had once, probably, harbored fine foreigners. All but buried under the great palms, it looked remote, shaded, and cool after the dust of the sun-swept street. She got out of her carromata, and finding the iron gate in the stone wall that surrounded the estate open, walked in. The rhythmic click of wooden slippers across a stone floor and the soft drip of water caught Julie's ear.

A muchacho appeared in response to her knocks and led her upstairs to a sala furnished with a piano, a marble-topped table, a heterogeneous array of conch shells, and some startling looking portraits of persons of extraordinarily blended race. Señora Reredo entered the room, a tall woman with a slight stoop and a passive gentleness of face. She was in native costume, all black. Genteel native women are almost always dressed in mourning. She led Julie to a large airy room, well furnished and over-looking the garden. She mentioned a sum which, while not extravagant, was not completely gratifying.

When they returned to the sala the children came trooping in, quietly sparkling little folk in European clothes. The Señora said that next year they would sell the old house which she had inherited and go back to Spain where the children could be educated. Her husband had an apothecary business, which he would sell out.

The Señora said that she was going back to the land of her father's people. His blood had sojourned afar long enough. Julie glanced up at the human array on the wall, and wondered.

A shriek burst from the children, and simultaneously an energetic, purposeful, round pink pig with an up-lifted curl of a tail burst into the room. He was looking for the children who had deserted him. He clearly knew his way about, for he at once dashed behind the piano where the youngest had hidden away from him, and gave forth squeals of joyful discovery. The Señora ordered the children to take the beast out. He went in the utmost rebellion.

Julie did not say anything about Delphine. She was distressfully at sea concerning him. Isabel had offered to keep him, but for some not clearly defined reason, Julie did not wish to leave him with her. She left the Señora with his problem still unsolved.

Returning, she found Isabel in a disguise of costume so splendid it thrilled one like a poem. She had a tower of jewels on her head. Her body was incased in a kind of closely clinging filagree of shining armor studded with great gems — which, however, left considerable of the concrete, natural Isabel exposed. Her blue eyes sparkled like the great head jewels of a goddess. She looked as if she had been looted from some

temple. Nobody, Julie decided, would be able to entertain a pretension alongside her. Her own Pleiad mistiness seemed to dissolve before this glory.

Yet Isabel came over to her and, flicking Julie's neck with the end of her nail, exclaimed: "That white, white skin — fit for the mantle of an archangel to come down to earth in! And that white fire back of you! Have you an appointment with the millennium of the soul of man that you can contrive to look like that? Take me along, Julie — take me along!"

Isabel was obliged to leave early, but she had provided an escort for Julie; no less a person than Governor Shell of the Mohammedan Group. Julie had heard a lot about this strange, dark hermit of a man, and wondered how he came to be attending such a function; but Isabel explained that he was visiting the Governor-General, and couldn't very well help himself.

"I don't believe he wanted to take me," Julie murmured. "He is said to dislike women."

"Perhaps he didn't," Isabel declared, unabashed; "but when I told him about your exile on an island not far from his own, his missionary instinct was touched. You couldn't go with any one more distinguished."

When Governor Shell entered the room, Julie felt at once the force of his somber, reticent personality. She observed that he did not look very young, and that he had a strained sweated look as if he were pushing himself always just beyond the margin of what a man might reasonably do. It was a dark world in which he worked, in the hope of stumbling on the formula that would transform the preternaturally vicious psychologies of the Moros.

In their common experience of the far Southern Islands they found a great deal to talk about. When they reached the Governor General's mansion, the balconies were glittering with lights festooned like fireflies against the darkness. The Palace sat in huge grounds, one side of which touched the street Malacañang, while the other dropped down to the Pasig, along which the gala boats were to appear.

Everybody was crowded onto the galleries in whimsies of costumes. Seats had been reserved for Governor Shell, and he and Julie sat down near the judges of the carnival. Almost all of these people were prominent personages, unknown to Julie; so the Governor explained them to her.

The tall lady in the handsome native costume and the rope of pearls was the wife of the Governor-General. Julie admired her graceful dignity. Colonel Messenger, the man next to her, was one of the biggest Americans in Manila; he had straightened out the land problem, which the religious orders had engendered.

"He and his family are what you might call typical colonists," the Governor said. "They have settled down on the soil. That young man at his side is his eldest son — Chad."

"He scarcely seems as large a structure as his father," Julie commented, "—but what a fury of dreaming he has in his face! Isn't he the one Isabel told me of — who married a mestiza in order to serve the East, and who believes we are in the process of remaking it?"

The Governor nodded. "He's a great friend of Barry's."

Julie seized the opportunity to ask the question that

had been for days on her lips, but which she had somehow refrained from putting to Isabel.

"Is he back?"

"Yes. He got in on the *Rohilla Maru* yesterday. Brought a Chinaman with him—a Sun Yat Sen Something, I think the name was. He likes to show them what's going on here—and he's the one to do it. He has not only had the experience, but he has the intuition which makes him understand the life of the East. He has had a great deal more than most people imagine, to do with the formation of the first representative government over here. He and Caples make a strong team."

Governor Shell pointed out a tubby, deeply tanned, and patriarchally bearded little man; and Julie remembered his name as that of the head of the Commission and a well known scientist.

"Barry hasn't the training of Caples, and Caples hasn't Barry's faith. Caples is ironic, and believes the Americans are going to get tired, as they usually do, and quit, leaving the worst tangle the East ever saw. Science and acute deductions take the faith out of a man, and faith, I believe," the Governor said hesitatingly, "is one of the great natural forces. It enables Barry to convince a native quicker than any other white man in the East can do it."

The Governor took out his watch, as if he were in the habit of living by it. "Not a float so far!" he complained. "That's always the way—you wait and wait!"

"And the Moros never keep you waiting a minute?"

He smiled. "You mustn't think I'm not enjoying myself! Nobody ever heard me talk so much in my life."

Julie who had been studying the face of the man who had married the Eurasian—to save the East, demanded:

“What does Chad Messenger believe?”

“That things are very bad on the earth and need what he calls a Great Change. He talks a lot about it.”

“He looks,” Julie reflected, “as if he had great expectations. What do you think he expects?”

“Oh, some sort of metamorphosis in which the earth will break out of its grub’s existence into a winged thing. Wars—perhaps a lot of them, plagues or earthquakes or even a big war which, like Noah’s flood, would wipe out part of the world and start the rest all over again.”

“It sounds apocalyptic.”

“He and Barry have a lot of these East Indian mystics for friends, and they have a grand prophetic time together. I say the future is a disease with them,” the Governor grumbled.

Two men were entering the select group of judges. The more noticeable of the two was tall and of that consumptive leanness frequent among the scholarly type of Oriental. His pale yellow face was indicative of a Mongolian infusion of blood—a face full of arresting attributes which were yet unaccountably screened to the Occidental eye.

“Pablo Orcullu!” Shell remarked. “Recognized leader of the Filipino people. Some think him very strong—but notice that stoop in the shoulders, the scholars’ stoop! That’s Pablo’s kismet. He may scheme ever so splendidly, but when his moment comes that will hold him back. His kind haven’t learned to think largely and act largely simultaneously.

"Orcullu," he added, "admires Barry. He owned a big dead old city down South, and he sent for Barry to come down and help him build it over in fine new cement. He says Barry is the biggest white man in the East.

"The sad little fat fellow? De Cadegas. They said in Europe, where he studied, that he had one of the finest voices in the world. But there was the Tobacco Factory which spelled the universe in dollars to his parents; so the nightingale of the East counts tobacco leaves."

The first float now emerged into view upon the river, through fantastically light foliage. It brought the Governor to his feet with an exclamation. Crimson silken sails, like the enormous petals of a flower outspread to the night, glided beneath them. In the boat stood a conclave of Moro chieftains in their vivid costumes of coral red, tight velvet trousers and jackets buttoned with gold coins, with turbans and gorgeous serongs, and brightly cruel spears and curved swords.

Julie gave a little cry as she recognized one of the figures — Dicky-Dicky, the dwarf of Isabel's household, in the glittering regalia of a rajah, his small person redolent with princely dignity.

"That scrap of a man was actually a Rajah once!" Governor Shell leaned down to inform her. "It lasted only a few months, unfortunately for history, for I hear he made a wise and progressive ruler. The real Rajah, Bulai, was, by a queer chance, also a dwarf, and in appearance very nearly the twin of the captured Visayan slave. Bulai was a timid prince, afraid of his responsibilities; so between the two mannikins it

was cooked up that Dicky-Dicky should impersonate the Rajah.

"The tribe, however, found it out, and it was from a particularly undesirable end that Dicky-Dicky was saved, through the medium of a vast amount of gold, by our friend Isabel, who happened to be visiting somewhere thereabouts."

"And so poor Dicky-Dicky will never reign again!"

"Oh, I don't know. He may break out again. He may have his kingdom reestablished by the government that Isabel plans."

Up the river now was coming a caricature of the Archipelago. Queen Philippinitis in crown and robe with unstockinged feet and flapping slippers cocked shockingly up before her, and smoking a dreadful cigar a yard long. Under her arm she hugged a huge bespurred cock. She was politely ignored by the official party, but was everywhere else hailed with vociferous appreciation.

Then came the float that Julie had been waiting for — Isabel's marble barge, carved and tinted with indigo, lit from stern to stern, and crowded with Asiatic figures, from the steppes of the Tartar to the borders of the Kurd. In the center of these human arabesques sat Isabel enshrined. She had wonderfully contrived it all, and there could be no doubt about the preëminence of the float.

Then quite suddenly the attention of the beholders was drawn to a tall brown man who stood on top of the barge with a long propelling pole in his hand. In the striking suggestion of his posture and the occasional glimpses of his brown uplifted features, he managed to convey a significance that transcended the

glory below. There below reposed the ancient, static, and unstable magnificence of the East; but above — alert, upright, asking its question of the future and the judgment of white men — was the Man-Soul of Asia. The boat drifted off into the shadows, but that brown image remained, graven on the brains of those who saw it.

“That was Barry!” Julie said half under her breath. She stared around at this strange galaxy of people, whose background of the East gave them a touch of fantasy. These days of the Empire, or creation — when a fragment of the East was shaking under a stupendous renovation! And back of it, these dauntless men and women who were stirring pledged to the resurrection! A new world must take shape under their will, a world of the best ideals.

There was an exhilaration in the air, an elixir working upon an ancient life. An intoxication came over Julie as she watched and listened to the music. The faces melted into a phantasmagoria, a marching host dedicated to the East and sweeping on to shape its mighty fate. Visions and dreams pulsated to the music — strains of India, Malaysia, of far Mongolia woven into its throbbing war-like tones. There must be some place in the march for her! Some time in the Experiment that place would unfold and give her a part in the big things these men’s brows portended. Hope quivered through her like the life-giving warmth of the sun.

They arose from their seats, and started to mingle in the throng. Julie felt some one seize her arm. It was Ellis Wilbur, the girl who had pointed people out to her that first memorable night in Manila.

“How is the girl-hermit? I am so glad to see her

back — though I wager that Providence has taken no note of the things she has done."

Julie returned the greeting warmly.

"Did you see Barry McChord?" Ellis asked. "Isn't it just like him to drive the things home with hammer and tongs?"

"Do you feel at home in this Cataclysm here?" she demanded abruptly. "I don't! Yet it makes my mind spring as if I had found another dimension for it. A long time hence, no doubt, I shall look back upon it with the thrill of some splendid adventure in which I ever so little engaged. I'm not a participant. I don't care about the East, but I do care very much about the courage of this attempt to disperse the dust of ages; of which the smell is all over the East, in the hovels of the poor and the decayed dwellings of kings."

As she started away, she remarked: "Isabel, I hear, has lost the best one of her stupendous bracelets in the water, and is frightfully cross. Don't let her quarrel with anybody."

A wild throb shot through Julie's pulses. There above the crowd was again the Excelsior face — that fantastic name she had given it, oh, so long ago! The tawny head was watchfully alert, as if it were used to scanning great distances. The face, glowing and vital, had a desert tan, and in it was a hint of the desert's awesome solitudes. His light, vigorous frame seemed to have been built for heroic purposes. It struck Julie that here was the real Atlas to hold the New World on his unbending shoulders.

Julie watched him breathlessly. People stopped him everywhere to talk. Still he was advancing in her direction. Her heart pumped so that the blood seemed

to be escaping all over her body. When he was quite near, his eyes turned in her direction. He stared hard, and an abrupt change came over his face.

"It can't be you!" he said before her, as if he expected her to contradict him. Then he added: "Some time, of course, I knew you would come back! But it's been such a long time. Something seemed to swallow you up after that night — on the roof, you remember."

She did remember, and it was plain that he remembered too, just as if many sorry months had not intervened. Very few people were like that — capable of taking up, as if it had just been dropped, the mood of the past. And they were back in it easily at once. It was only by an extreme chance that she was here at all. In these improbable times, where life shifted as upon a screen from day to day, any expectations were preposterous. Yet he accepted her reappearance as something that was bound to come about in chance. His certainty that they would meet again seemed strange at first, and then the strangeness vanished.

"I was called out of the room — to the cholera situation in Leyte, wasn't it?" he went on, looking intently at her. "I thought I'd be back at once — that's the way over here. But when I did return, you had disappeared completely — not a clue to you left."

Julie smiled grimly. "The East misled me for a while. Now that it has found me again, I wonder —"

"It was thought that you had gone back to the States — but I knew somehow that you had not. How did you happen to go so far away?"

"It was you who sent me, that night. You breathed the fire into me that started me going. But I couldn't

show you, or God, or anybody a thing that I have done!"

His far-seeking, gold-colored eyes flamed through her. "That's the idea that stalks us all. And we can't live an age or two to find out what all this fine fever of our actions will boil down to. We can only go on believing that our particular fire is unquenchable. I have my misgivings, too. There are shadows lifting on the horizon at this moment that may portend untold calamity. But I am perfectly positive that victory — far along the road, perhaps — is ahead.

"As for my sending you away," he exclaimed swiftly, "one does not, for all the causes that animate the earth, send persons like you away. How could I — a being all star-dust and light?" He looked in admiration upon her shining youth.

"I am a Pleiad!" Julie explained. "Don't ask me where the other six are. There was no time for the human things — and a Pleiad was easy, just a puff of light."

"I remember," he said, "how glad I was to have found you — only to have you slip out, like a ship in a dream!"

He was regarding her deeply, as if he would search out the things that were printed most indelibly on the plate of her mind.

"You have changed!" he decided abruptly.

"Not quite so young?" She laughed wryly.

"Nahal helped to cure that raw curse."

"Come out on the gallery, and let's talk!"

They walked to the end of the gallery overlooking the river, which, like a current of silver, stretched down through the city.

"Of course," she told him, "when you were the means of sending me forth, I went believing that I was going to work miracles. I lived terribly stirred by that idea all the time!"

"And inevitably you must have performed them. It's the time for miracles!"

"For you, yes." She looked up admiringly to his heroic height. "But you see, I am only a village school-teacher and not a prince of the East. It was my beloved island, though, down there, my own domain I thought. I was to have done so much, but I really did nothing at all. All my grand purposes came to nothing. I tried to bring peace, and lift up a generation of light — that is, it always seems to me I tried to do that — and they took the children all away from me."

The tears sprang to her eyes. "I can't get over it — or forget it. Right there a fine sheath that enveloped me dropped to pieces. I was wholly unhappy and unsuccessful. My friends died or ceased to believe in me; my people that I was to have led to the Promised Land — Oh, don't," she cried, turning to him, "break your heart with a dream like that!"

His eyes, full of commiseration, flamed at her last words into visionary light. "I dream," he declared, "of the whole darkened lengths of the East! The better state is coming," he continued more gently, "not to one land or one race but to the whole Humanity — and the East must be in the Change, too. Up from the muddy Caliban that it is there will rise a soul to fashion a new Asia after the ideals which we brought across the sea from the greatest Republic of the world. Some time not so far off, mark my words, common coolies," he exclaimed, "shall stand

in the Holy courts of the Forbidden City and in the Temple of the Great Lama at Lhasa, the two most inviolate spots on earth, and proclaim the equality of men!"

His face was afire. He thrust his strong nervous hands through his rumpled hair.

"Some of us are daring to play a bigger game than that of this archipelago. We are bidding for stakes that are far in the future. I was in China for years before I came here — I am steeped in it, I'll confess that, I have more than one iron in the fire. The times are beginning to take point. As an old Brahmin priest I know says; the souls of men are making ready all over the earth."

He tingled all over with a power that seemed to communicate itself electrically to her. It was fine to be near him, to be in his atmosphere. He made her transcend her human self for a while, bore her forth on the crest of universal things.

"I want you to see the sort of things that I'm bound up in!" he said. "I want you to enter a little into my beliefs. Though, after all, we are floating on the waters of mystery."

"A big black enigma, it all seems to me!"

"You speak as if you do not expect a solution!" he exclaimed.

"Things will have to clear awfully for that — for me at least. I have no expectations any more. Women are not heroic over here. The men do the big things. I thought I was an apostle. I find I am only a woman tramp through the East — who has lost her quest. I have made a mistake. Perhaps I should turn back!"

"Ah! Don't talk that way. Be as wild as you

please in your dreams, this is the background for them. If you could see the extent of the domain over which my aspirations dare to play! You'd think I was truly an Arabian Nights' romancer."

"Tell me about this domain of dreams?"

His gaze traveled far, very far off, it seemed. "My territory of the soul goes over Asia. I have stood on a tower of the Wall and have looked over the stretches of the desert, towards the heights of the Himalayas, beyond the reach of eyes. Below me lay the great uncomprehending land across which men were moving in their bitter inadequate fates. I wanted to march with them, soul to soul. I wanted to stir them to struggle and revolt. I wanted them to find a new vision. Those," he said, turning back to her, "are still my hopes!"

"I've never seen China," Julie said, after a pause. "I have always wanted to."

"It will be the most staggering fact of the future. One scarcely dares speculate upon it, it is so incalculably vast and undecipherable. Think of the potentialities of three times our soul muster. Conceive of the disaster to the world if by any accident in a generation or two this human force arrayed itself on the wrong side! In the Boxer Rebellion, the people were hitting blindly at the world, when in reality they meant to strike at their own rotten government."

His voice dropped. "What some of us who love China want to do is to put her on the right side of the bars — change the habit of mind of centuries; wipe out those old ivory chess-men in Peking, and set the young China on her winged way. And for that we are willing to go to almost any lengths."

"Aren't you trusting a stranger with secret affairs?"

"You were never a stranger!"

Under this bestowal of faith, Julie recalled the night on the roof.

"I want to thank you," she said with feeling, "for helping me in Nahal. I was in sore straits."

"If I had known—" he said.

Finding no words with which to push away the obstacle of Nahal, she swept on quickly: "Do you know what I might do with my Filipino ward? He's a small brown creature for whom there doesn't seem to be a place in the world. I'm not a capable Providence, I fear. He wouldn't be left behind, so I just had to bring him along with me—though what I was to do with an eleven-year-old Filipino boy, I couldn't think. But you should have seen his little face that day looking across the water toward the magic lands. I seldom know what to do with myself, to say nothing of anybody else. What do you think I could do with him?"

"Give him to me. The boys in my house have their duties so confounded that domestic activity has very nearly come to a halt. Delphine who is just from the Provinces, and honest, can act as an official tattletale and break the gang. Why should you be discouraged over the nonconformity of the island of Nahal," he demanded, "when I cannot evoke industry from a single native in my home?"

Julie pondered. "He ought to go to school," she said. "You see, he's a very special person. He's caught the fire, too, and wants to forge ahead."

"There is a school within a few squares of my

house. We'll let him go right on to school till he makes a destiny for himself, and some day when he's president of the Philippine republic, he'll raise a statue to you on the Luneta, as the Light of Ages."

"I think I must have stumbled on a fairy godfather!" Julie smiled. "But they say you're that to everybody."

"That's not true. I've never been as nice to anybody as I've been to you. Don't dream for a minute that I go round adopting stray children that everybody has picked up."

Julie laughed. "Perhaps we'd better go and move about a bit."

They came near a group of people who seemed to have congregated in a corner of a room. Julie heard the word "*Independencia!*" burst with a little shock into the midst of them.

A man spoke up as if in answer to its challenge: "We are within the walls of the East — where we were called by Fate — for issues greater than we can to-day foresee."

Julie remembered the speaker, Matfield Barron, whom Ellis Wilbur had described to her. She saw that he was addressing Isabel, who stood smiling with quiet irony.

"Woman of the Cross-roads!" he went on whimsically, "who have the East and the West in your veins — what do you think?"

Warring impulses rippled for a moment across Isabel's face. As she stood there, torn by contentions of her race, her remarkable emotions in play, Julie perceived how different she was from every other woman in the room. Here was a woman who thought as deeply as any of them, who certainly transcended

all of them in beauty and gifts, and yet who, nevertheless, belonged beyond the margin.

Some resentful flame burned through her discretion. "Under a master, can personality be preserved?"

"But yet a little while we must tarry, to lay down the foundation stones," Matfield explained.

"Seven times seven civilizations are buried under the soil of Asia. Wait till you get as crowded as we are over here, till the very oceans are disputed — then behold the earth running with blood, and the seas on fire. You of the West struggle to expurgate from the East its human passions. You strive to teach it to inhabit your high altruistic plateau. But, you, yourselves, shall yet at some surpreme urge revert to the most stupendous of those human passions. In one concentrated hour all your elevated mankind shall be at one another's throats like wolves. You will do well to keep the East quiet then while you tear out one another's hearts."

Barry alone after this explosion regarded Isabel with impartial interest. "It's horrible, of course!" he told Julie in an undertone, "but you know every time she talks like that, I almost believe her. She sounds like St. John, and I've always had an inkling that he was dead right. The Armageddon! Toppling thrones! But it won't happen in my time!"

"You seem sorry!"

"Why shouldn't I want to take part in the renewing of the earth?"

"It exhilarates you and depresses me. This is struggle enough for me. You see, I have ten million timid grandmothers back of me and it is some task to give them all a jolt."

Isabel stepped nearer them.

"Was that the Yellow Peril you were talking about, Isabel?" Holborne smiled into his mustache.

Her olive face flushed proudly. "The peril of a United East."

"And Ghengis Khan and his hordes will again overrun us?" he asked ironically.

"Ah! If only he would arise! If only somebody strong, strong would come!" Her gaze wandered desperately to the spot where Julie and Barry stood.

"But you have another land!" Matfield Barron expostulated. "When you lift those violet eyes of yours, I have visions of long rolling uplands, with gray mist upon them, and of the sun, and thyme, and quiet sheep." He came nearer, and spoke in a low, persuasive tone. "We belong now to the East—the East that rejects no man; nevertheless, let us drink to that other land."

He led her off to the punch bowl, but Julie saw that she refused the cup he offered her. Some of these people seemed to have a great deal shut up in their hearts. Julie remembered Ellis's warning, and made a move toward Isabel; but just then somebody began to sing.

Julie thrilled with delight. The Arabian Nights' Tales to music! One saw them all, Sindbad, Aladdin, Sheherazade, The Calenders and the Kings float wondrously by in arabesques of inconceivable tints of melody. Like magic the colorful splendor of Asian loves unfurled. The voice had a divine aroma, as if weighted with the fragrance of the gardens of Paradise.

Then it took on a new tone, and became intolerable in its play upon the soul. The girl wanted to escape.

It struck too deep. It challenged the Judgment Day. Her gaze traveled around those groups of faces. Barry's desert face looked as if he saw the veil lifted and the world in full completion of his dreams. Isabel's twilight face was tense with suppressed exultation. The enigmatic being, Orcullu, did not appear to stir, but a fire was growing in his eyes. Shell's somber face stared stonily into the night; Matfield Barron's sash drooped forlornly at his side; Holborne looked into his hard hands, as if to read over their story; Leah Chamberlain was fluttering distressfully, like a bird whose wings had been caught; Chad Messenger looked suddenly pinched and weary, while Ellis Wilbur from the edge of the group caught Julie's eye as if to challenge her to say that all this was not a dream.

The man who counted tobacco leaves left the piano.

The throng of guests gradually dissolved. While Isabel turned to speak a final word to Orcullu, Barry bent to Julie from his great height.

"I'm coming to take you for a drive to-morrow, to show you what's happened while you were away."

Their eyes caught in a moment of golden fire. The night on the roof of his house came back to her with a rush of overpowering recollections. Not until Isabel thrust herself between them, could she bring herself back into the self out of which she had been transported.

Isabel seemed volcanically to drive them apart. She stood looking from one to the other. Barry made a move toward the stairs. Isabel stopped him, the blue fire of her eyes ravaging his face. Julie moved away. As she walked down the steps, she glanced back and

saw the two figures still standing at the head of the stairs. Isabel's shadowy face was lifted — the wide gold bands glittering on her arms. She looked as she did in her moments of vision, as if her imagination perceived and was holding up to Barry the power of which she dreamed.

Julie undressed in her ornate bed-chamber, but she did not attempt to go to sleep. She leaned pensively against one of the carved bed posts, and stared out into the night, where the moon's great searchlight, exploring the cities of the earth, was turned full on this Eastern one. A shining city, in the realms of darkness! Below lay the river with the bowed sleeping foliage of its shores. Riding its smooth current was a sliver of a boat, in it a solitary native caroling down the stream. How often had she watched other little boats riding silver waters in artless celebrativeness! Nahal, so far away! It would never be anything but her unconquerable kingdom — the dead garden of her soul.

All around her here were big deeds. What was the accolade these men possessed, and which she still had not found? Shell had ceded his life to it. Because of it Barry grappled tirelessly with races of men. Where among these architects of the future did she belong? She had enrolled her spirit among them. She had been so sure that there was a share for her in this splendid achievement. But the Great Adventure had passed her over. She was not metal for its forging.

But it was a hard way — this way of these agents of the future. Could one go on laboring forever in blind belief? The great structure these men were rearing might fall to pieces like a house of cards at the stroke of Isabel and Orcullu. If the Americans gave up the Islands, as it appeared they might do — a puff

of smoke in the cosmos, and that would be the end of the whole thing.

She crept into bed, and dreamed of Barry as Atlas struggling to uphold a world that was falling over her head.

CHAPTER XVI

JULIE spent the morning after the carnival arranging the transfer of her effects to the Tondo. Isabel remained in bed, and did not emerge till Barry appeared at four o'clock.

Barry was driving a swift powerful horse hitched to a light rubber-tired trap — a rather unusual combination for Manila. He greeted them both in his radiant manner as he came up the stairs.

"I am going to take you to Father Hull's," he said to Julie. "He asked me to bring you over." Then, with quick intuition, noticing the bag in Julie's hand, "If that's your luggage, we'll land you at your new home."

He swept the bag out of her grasp, and smiled down upon her. "I am going to show you the miracle of Manila!"

Julie, turning to Isabel to bid her good-by, was startled by the expression she surprised upon her face. Isabel was agitated about something. Her mood had shot up for an instant like an angry flame. Julie had a vague idea that she might be displeased with her for not accepting her invitation to stay on with her. She renewed her expressions of gratitude to Isabel, and said she would return soon to see her.

Isabel said they should see each other often — quite often. She kissed Julie, and advised her to keep out of the sun — "because of the headaches," she added.

"I wish there were something to stop them," said Julie. "They rage all through the heat of the day."

Isabel regarded her closely for a moment, then withdrew her eyes.

Quite unconscious of any disturbance of the ether, Barry passed his arm through Julie's and together they descended the stairs. He assisted her into the trap, and picked up the reins with vast satisfaction. "I drive myself," he said, "because I can't bear to sit idle behind a swift horse."

The powerful animal sprang through the streets, and whirled them across towering iron bridges. They passed the skeleton of a huge new hospital, the frameworks of a new school and other public buildings. Over one vacant piece of ground, Barry drew up in fervor.

"Site of the new university!" he explained. "Rizal's dream. It's only a few lines on paper so far — but it's on the way.

"These buildings cannot be shaken or blown down like paper; and something more than a race of columbines must come to be born in them."

Julie peered up into his face. "I never saw anybody so filled with a thing as you are with all this. I don't believe you have a soul separate from it."

He smiled. "I wonder!" he said. "Well, I'm fearfully busy, and happy as a lark. Oh, but I don't want them to shut down on all this!

"It's a nuisance to be finite," he declared; "one can't be in two or three places at once. I can't leave here now, yet we've got to keep the wheels of the Asiatic car of civilization on the tracks. Now that the Assembly has cut loose, I'm holding my breath. It's a grand time to be alive!" Barry declared, relapsing, as he occasionally did, into Irish idiom. "Now, when the whole world is constructive. Once

when I was in Dublin, off my ship, an old woman looked in my palm and said, 'It's a great destruction that's coming!'

" 'To me?' I asked.

" 'To the whole earth,' she said.

" 'But I didn't ask for the telling of the whole world's fortune,' I said.

" 'It's your fortune, and everyman's,' she answered. 'But after it's blown off the globe, a glorious time will be coming.'

" 'And what am I to be doing with myself until then?' I demanded.

" 'Travel Eastward!' she said."

Julie looked at him curiously. In a flash she recalled the conversation with Chad Messenger.

"What do you think is going to happen?" she asked.

"The shaking out of the old countries of the freedom of man; the bringing down of a few wills, and the placing on top of the whole will. A change in the destiny of man!"

"Well, if as much of a change can be realized as has been already realized here in so short a time, I am ready to believe in anything! Look hard at your city, and wonder at the magic that has transformed a dirty, insanitary Malay city to—well, almost an oriental City Beautiful."

Barry's face clouded. "It shall be the cleanest in the world when we get through, but many a dark enemy lurks in our path. Look at those stagnant moats, infested with pythons and myrmidons of death—and at the drainage system! When will they attune their oriental ears to the truths of sanitation? And the cholera-infected food they smuggle in from the

provinces! No, all is not well; and yet, help me Heaven, they believe back home that we've finished — that these people should now lead themselves!"

"But you are here to drive the unclean spirits out." Julie smiled absently to herself. "I think so often of what you told me that first night, about your coming upon this city which was to inspire your whole life."

"It's true I never saw China really as she is to be until I saw her in this new light. You see, I wasn't always an American. I guess that's why all this impressed me so. You people over there take your heritage too much for granted. I was born in Ireland — a racked, wretched country, like those of the East — and of very poor people. My father and his father's father, as far back as you can think, had been at the eternally losing game of trying to make a living on this earth off another man's land.

"It came over me when I was a lad"—Barry frowned out at the land-scape—"that there was no hope whatever for me. My mother—who was of good family, and had married beneath her, as they say—taught me out of books, and stirred the urge in me. She was a wistful woman and homesick for the world. So she wanted me to go out and get the best luck of the gods. Mother and Father both died—" He stopped, and seemed to have forgotten his narrative in his thoughts until Julie said quietly:

"Please go on!"

"Then my Uncle James came along and took me by the shoulder, and said: 'Let's go find our own country, Lad!'"

"We shipped on a vessel, and saw Russia and Germany, Italy and France—where Uncle James said a

man might live master of himself but never at all could learn the tongue. We crossed the ocean, and one night we saw against the sky a great burning torch lifted over a new land.

"Back of that torch life began. Uncle James made money in truck gardening, and sent me to school. But still, somehow, I hadn't found my place. I followed the word of the old woman of Dublin, and finally I struck this spot. And better than anything I had seen anywhere else, I liked what the Americans were set about to do here."

Julie's eyes shone. "Another wanderer called!" she softly exclaimed.

"Many are called, but few are chosen," Barry meditated. "You saw one side of the Colony last night. Father Hull could tell you about the reverse side. Others chose mighty issues in this great time, but Father Hull took as his charge the souls of his countrymen — to keep them up to their high engagement. For this is a place and a time taking crude strength to survive. Rough creatures like me are in their element. The priest has many twisted destinies under his charge, people who have suffered and fallen. He alone knows how to deal with them. He alone in this great rough-shod, forward marching colony stops to gather up those who drop behind.

"There was Blackstone! I helped Blackstone to get the contract for the big Santa Cruz bridge — the big thing that was to bring the fortune he had sought for fifteen years over the two Americas; to himself and his wife, who had waited all those years for the Wheel to turn so she could marry him.

"But it was Father Hull who managed to save him from a long sentence in a native prison, when the

scandal of the adulterated cement broke forth. Blackstone's lawyer was the Old Judge — a drunkard and a 'Remittance Man,' but in spells a tremendous lawyer. Father Hull got him on the case, made one derelict rise up to save another — as he did in as splendid a court scene as I have ever witnessed. I don't know whether Blackstone was guilty or not, neither does the Old Judge; but Father Hull believes in him, and that's enough for all of us.

"Then the Old Judge, fearing the Blackstones would starve because of the boycott put upon him, went to board with him. He suffers torture from Mrs. Blackstone's cooking. I've stopped in there with him occasionally, and after one frowning survey of the burnt meal, the Judge usually roars for the beer which he keeps on the ice in quantities."

"But most of the Old Judge must be fine!" Julie exclaimed.

"Yes! He was long ago pensioned off by his wealthy wife, whose pride he had outraged, and told to seek other climates. He has tried the wild life of the Orient for some time, but now he is getting old and tired and lonely. He has drunk the cup to the lees, and would turn back except for the fact that once long ago he had a sentiment for the woman who sent him out; and this contract with her he will respect to the end. Oh, there are any number of others," he broke off. "Ask Father Hull to tell you about them; he knows all about that other side which I don't see so much of."

"Here we are! That's the Rectory just ahead. It's just the neglected barren outer shell that you'd expect Father Hull's selfless spirit to dwell in. Even the old housekeeper is a pick-up too, the relict of a

colonial who died from one of the swift illnesses of the East and left her stranded on these shores a hopeless incompetent whom no one else could make foot room for."

It was this person who led them up the stairs to Father Hull's sala, where he rose out of a long chair to greet them. Julie was so startled by the change in his appearance that she barely suppressed an exclamation. In some strange way his personality seemed already to have commenced to break its moorings. To Julie, who was particularly acute to intimations, the shadow of death seemed already to lie upon him.

Two other callers came up on the porch, and Barry went out to join them. Julie sank down in a chair and regarded the priest troubledly.

"I want to tell you how grateful I am to you for getting me a transfer to Manila. I was so anxious to get away from Nahal! I am inclined to believe you were right about — my not being exactly fitted for it."

"Things have been happening to you," he said.

Julie smiled painfully.

"My child," he said indulgently, "you are on one quest and you think you are on another. Sometime, with some pain perhaps, it will be straightened out. But it is people like you who help move the world. Without such there would be no human history — just the thoughts of scholars — and priests. You see, it takes deeper forces than personal passions to carry forward the human pilgrimage. It took the master passion — man's love for man — to lift humanity into a soul."

He broke off, and pointed to the glimpse of the ocean that could be seen through the spaces of the vines. "It's a very beautiful sunny sea, isn't it?"

And always I can see the ships on it — going out.”

Julie who had been regarding him with emotion, exclaimed tremulously, “Why don’t you go home? You look so tired.”

The great calm in which he had been enfolded suddenly broke. A fire smoldered into life above his suken cheeks, an alert look as at some trumpet call. He squared wearied shoulders. “My place is here! Some of us will never go back. We came to see it through. My camp-fire colony, full of raw life, of struggle, of tragedy! I couldn’t leave it. Accoutered for the wilderness, we sit around the flames — faces of failure, despair, and crime turned out of the shadow of the past to the hope of the new land, where the slate is wiped clean. It is this hour, my child, that must be watched over. A sea of struggling humanity with heads stuck up out of the flood. In the New Chance, the swimmer must be stronger than the current. I have been a soldier,” he added; “I have followed hard trails. I couldn’t turn back now.

“The Odyssey of the East!” he mused. “Life here has seethed down to its elements. The passions of men are too dangerously on the surface, and existence is wild, swift and sweet. Strong unbridled youth of men and beauty in a land of no traditions or standards. Sudden wealth in prodigal untried hands; princely Americans living so that the poor native thinks that kings have come to dwell with him. Millions of dollars from home to run the Treasure Islands! All magnificently, gallantly American! In conditions like these ghosts begin to walk, and I must be here to lay them.

“Just as you came in I was thinking of some of these people. There’s a lad in a bank I’m worried

about. By virtue of his Americanism he thought he was entitled to something better than a government clerkship. Straining always toward the gilded doors of the Empire's elect, he got himself made manager of this newly organized bank on precisely the same salary he had before. But doors have opened to him, and he spends like the rest. Some day not so far distant, I fear by the haggard look in his face, the poor lad will vanish out of this place, to be caught up by the secret service men in some great hostelry in India or China to which his singed youth will gravitate. Then the long, awful sentence in a Malay prison.

"There are some, you see, who were never to find fortune in El Dorado, some who even a year ago walked these streets in high hope and to-day lounge seedily with vacant, staring eyes, in native booths. Then there is the ghost that is particular damnation — native wives. Not so long ago Chad Messenger, one of those men out there —" He motioned toward the door — "married Rosalie. It is already the tragedy it was bound to be. Chad is a high dreamer, and he ruined his life in an epic sort of way. Rosalie has gone back to her parents, but Chad remains nevertheless her husband —"

"What is she like?" Julie interrupted.

"You can see her any morning on the Escolta, wandering eternally among the shops. She is a great friend of your friend Isabel Armistead — and of Orcullu. Then there was Jerome — When he first crossed my path, he was an Infantry officer up in the Bosque. He had drifted into playing for high stakes — a thing prevalent over here. He was Quartermaster, and became involved in his accounts. He would have been court-martialled if old Vincente

Busqua had not put a devil's bargain up to him. Vincente said that if Jerome would marry Paula, his daughter, to whom Jerome had paid some attention, he would make good the shortage, and Jerome could quietly resign. Jerome took Paula to vindicate his Americanism; he was never criminally guilty, I believe — some subordinate, it is thought, took advantage of his carelessness.

“But good things happen once in a while — great things. Out of the lees, a few completely emerge. A lady whom you will meet this afternoon was one such, and her husband as well. She is coming to see me about a charitable school she conducts. Two abandoned drunkards, they were — he and she. Both came from very good families back home — that thought it expedient to get them out of the way. Colonies are always martyred that way. Ashby was a ‘Remittance Man,’ his wife when he ran across her was a stenographer. She had taken to secret drinking long before, through a romantic grief of her youth. Through mutual desperation they gravitated to each other, and after their marriage they continued to go steadily, awfully down. They became complete indigestibles in the social fabric, and appeared to be whizzing straight through the damnation of the East, when something happened, which I never completely understood. A traveler through the East imbued them with some special enlightenment, which they refer to as the ‘incontrovertible truth.’ They have tried to explain this new insight, as they call it to me, but upon a man reared and sustained on fixed tenets, it did not take hold. You see,” he explained, “as I grow old in far strange places of the earth, I am comforted by having fixed pillars to support my consciousness.

Still I should like to understand what it was that pulled these two, when they seemed so completely out of reach, back into the safety zone."

Barry and Chad came in from the porch, bringing with them a man whom they presented to Julie as Doctor Braithwaite, one of their very close friends, Barry said. Following them came the housekeeper conducting a tall woman of slender elegance of person, who Julie was startled to learn was Mrs. Ashby, the derelict the priest had just been telling her about. To connect the history she had heard with this distinguished looking gentlewoman was at first glance too preposterous to attempt. On closer view, however, the lines of the past appeared on the face, like a visible under-stratum which was gradually being eroded by the force of a new mode of existence. As they shook hands, the woman looked very attentively at Julie, as if there were something about her that she wanted to remember.

Mrs. Ashby engaged Barry in conversation, all having, so it seemed, a great deal to do with the matter of babies. Barry promised to send her quantities of condensed milk.

"We all beg from Barry," she explained to Julie. "But that is what he was made for; you can't impoverish a spirit like his. You see, there is always an epidemic of death among the babies over here. When they can't be fed naturally at birth, they are stuffed with rice, and of course they die. Mr. Ashby and I have a kind of school, if one might dare to call it that, and the feeding of babies is one of the things we are trying to teach."

A boy came in with a tray and passed cake and tea and glasses of a light cordial.

"Do you realize," said Chad Messenger, speaking for the first time, "that the first representative government that has been convened in the East met in this city to-day and made its bow to the onlooking Orient?" He held up his glass. "To the Philippine Assembly! May it realize the fearful portents it holds in its hands."

Barry's brows knit with anxiety. "It is so taken up with its star part on the Asian stage that it is forgetting distressing little facts like the city's drainage system. A city with bad water and worse drainage trying to lead the East!" He smiled dourly. "What is all our cleaning and scouring to accomplish if we can not get it out of the Oriental consciousness that their vile plagues are the will of God—Isabel's Green God of fate!" He drew a long breath. "But we will triumph, if only we're allowed the time—if only we're not halted in the thick of the dust."

"I insist," Father Hull put in, "that the introduction of baseball into the Islands has been Barry's greatest stroke. Though he come to wear the crown of Asia, it shall not compare to the glory of revolutionizing the native with clean universal sport. A new national passion that is neither bloody nor bestial, and in which all the tribes can unite."

"It's the schools that are getting them," Barry declared. "Why, the children do compound fractions for you before your face, sing the grandest songs about liberty, and feed you ice-cream that they made themselves in a freezer in the backyard. In the Straits Settlement, when I looked for schools, they showed me usually an empty hut with a dirt floor, in which there was no sign of pupils or teachers. That's the lot of

the tribute-paying East. Do you wonder these people think a wonder has appeared in Asia?"

"It appears to me," Mrs. Ashby said thoughtfully, "that there is just one thing that you have not sufficiently taken into account in your plans for the Millennium, Barry—and that is human nature. Only when the individual, each individual comes into a complete realization of his highest estate, can the ultimate peace and happiness of the world be secured. So few of us are conscious of our own mysterious possibilities." Her glance dwelt upon Julie. "For example," she said, "can Miss Dreschell interpret for us the unusual intimation in her own face? There is something there of which she may be quite unconscious, yet it is very significant."

Barry regarded Julie thoughtfully. "I noticed it—a year ago," he said gravely, "but I find it indefinable. It seems to be something that one merely feels."

Mrs. Ashby asked Julie if others had remarked this quality, and Julie reluctantly admitted that others had. Isabel, for example, who had called it spring magic, and the angel in the pillar of fire, and other utterly unintelligible bits of Eastern imagery. Nobody had ever said though, she reflected ruefully, that it would in any way make her great.

"To me it appears," Mrs. Ashby said, "to be the reflection—or the promise of great power."

Julie glancing up found Barry's eyes blazing upon her. His face wore the look it had worn that night on the roof when he had told her about finding his city. For a moment there seemed to be nobody but the two of them in the room, which had suddenly taken on magic dimensions and become the medium of a whole new existence.

The voices around her brought her back to her surroundings. She became aware of Chad's observation fastened deeply upon her. When his acute examination lifted, she overheard him say in an undertone to Mrs. Ashby: "This quality you see in the young lady's face, isn't it merely the transient magic of youth and sex? Aren't we, particularly men, inclined to be dazzled by the mysteries we read into a woman's form or face? She herself says she has failed in all her enterprises. What is that a promise of?"

"It is neither youth nor sex, but something that is as far removed from them as the stars," Mrs. Ashby replied.

Father Hull asked Barry and the other man to go across with him to the church, to make an estimate on some repairs.

"Which means," Mrs. Ashby said smilingly to Julie, as the men went away together, "that Barry will provide the lumber at no cost at all."

As she sat there watching Julie with her kindly keen eyes, she seemed to throw a veil of friendship around the girl, which her senses gratefully accepted. It seemed to Julie, whose head was aching and who had commenced to feel depressed and dispirited, that she had known Mrs. Ashby a long time and that they understood each other.

Mrs. Ashby asked her how old she was, and when Julie replied, she said: "You are very young! I wonder if there is after all anything quite so tragic as youth. It spends its golden years floundering about trying to find land — such a lot of floundering it sometimes does to no purpose. It perceives nothing clearly, but waits for the universe to clear — like a mist. It

searches in vain for the coherence of existence that it was taught to believe in, and it comes darkly to feel that everything on earth and in the sky is a cruel chance. It feels that it can't go on unless it can find the connection throughout everything — and at last its poor sad little soul comes to the conclusion that this mad chaos is not worth while.

“Governior Shell told me that he had spent thirty unproductive years of youth groping for the light. And as for me, I had come to the end of the cosmos, and was about to drop off. Why, when there was no clear and perfect aim in life should I waste more time in fruitless seeking, I argued. I became so sure that life was a collocation of meaningless realities that I felt I might as well get myself out of it as fast as I could.

“I didn't dream that a tireless Scheme would ceaselessly work me over until the reluctant atoms in me would begin to work too to turn the Wheel. Mine was a black existence, that only the worst wretches come to know; but I don't regret an hour of it. Nor must you despair over any experience that comes to you, for after this manner, my child, do we work our way into the light.

“I was a slacker, an idle wastrel in creation where the Master-mind and all His minute men all over all the worlds were battling toward the goal. I was long in realizing it. Keep running, my friend, in the footsteps of a striving God. That's what makes these men here so strong. They are battling with chaos to bring law and harmony into a part of the world. Consciously they don't know what great agents they are, any more than the chrysalis understands why it breaks from its shell. It's all a mighty subconscious un-

foldment of life. This business of the East has got to be straightened out on the earth."

Julie leaned forward, forgetful of her pain. "When you and Barry talk, I step back into the old enchantment of mood. I'm afraid I am not struggling any more. You see, I found that you can expend yourself fruitlessly." Her voice shook. "My mind is chaotic — just like your picture; and dark too, at times. Ever since I left the South my convictions have been oozing out, like sands out of an hour-glass. I meet life from moment to moment, and not in the least understanding why it falls as it does. We are all just a lot of ships lurching this way and that, at the wanton mercy of the ocean; and most of us, I think, disastrously collide. The Pilot, whoever and whatever he may be is always unchallengeable. Ah, when your most inspired efforts have failed, when your life seems to toss beyond your control, do you think you will find coherence in anything?"

Mrs. Ashby's clear eyes penetrated through her. "There is coherence in the solar system, and in all the system beyond; comets, after a thousand years reappear upon a calculated day. There is everywhere coherence, my child, because there is everywhere law."

"But what good does this law and order do me if I can't find it? Down here on this tiresome planet a being called Julie is doomed to struggle and battle and hope, and gets nowhere at all. Oh, if only one could get up from the Game, and turn one's self around for luck!"

"Since it is ordained that everything must get somewhere, you too must arrive," said Mrs. Ashby. "Ah," she added gently, "if I could give you the compass that would show you the direction!"

The men were returning. "Come and see me," she adjured. "Remember that I shall always be glad to give you any assistance I can."

The priest looked white and weary as his guests took their leave. As Chad went away in his *calesa*, Julie noticed that he cast a thoughtful backward glance at her and Barry.

Barry drove through parts of the city she had never seen before, and which she found not so pleasing as the others. "These are the places we haven't been able to touch," he said. "Look at this." He gestured up a narrow street into which they had suddenly veered, and the aspect of which caused Julie to recoil.

"This alley is very nearly the worst abomination on earth! Chinatown! We're trying to uproot it, but the denizens only make more mischief when they disperse. I have no government job, or I would have been on their necks long ago. I've never wanted to take an official position. The Governor sends me here and there over the islands on errands; but I want to be free — in case I'm needed across the water. Then too, I need money all the time, for a million things; and I have to be free to make it."

Julie's eyes gazed startled at the street they were following. "Is China like this?" she demanded in horror.

"This isn't like China or Europe. It's an abortive thing of both. Men become very vile when they take their vices underground," Barry declared, with the resigned manner of a god before all the evil in the world.

It was narrow, it was dirty, it was subterraneously vile, like pus under the surface. White men and yel-

low men, men of all races went here to hide their manhood in interims of bestiality.

"Animals sleep cleanly in holes," Barry remarked; "but these twists of the thing called life bury themselves in the earth for their deeper degradation. White women have been buried down there — live corpses; and have come forth bleached lepers to the light. Such holes of pestilential rats have, however, been closed up, so far as we know, and now all this evil pollutes before the sun."

Julie's breath caught in a little sob before the faces she saw. Somewhere she had dreamed of that monstrous array of human masks; a cruel, incomprehensible evil such as one must transcend the brute kingdom to find. It pressed a shadow down on the mind, like a hangman's cap. The creatures looked at her with leers of the most abominable intention. She sat up and stared with a white face up and down the cursed street. And up and down it, in their yellow heads, its subterranean minds were speculating upon her.

"What causes such a place?" she gasped. "There must be some accounting for such a hideous blot."

"Opium, mostly; together with the incomprehensible in man. It's the East at its vilest pitch, a hellish sub-consciousness in which murder is the cleanest conception. White men end in such places — drug-takers and drunkards, in violence usually. Chinese pirates form the nucleus of these lees of the coast. I could tell you true tales of them that would out-do Poe. When I first came to the East, it used to grip at my consciousness like a black hand. I felt in those days that my life was in peril all the time. It used to

worry me — till the Moros got me and led me with three other ragged beggars along the tops of more sun-baked craters than there are in the moon, telling us every morning as the sun rose that it was the last one we'd see. At first my soul just clawed itself to pieces, but at last I walked right over some unseen peak, and left the fear of death behind for good. That was somehow the biggest victory I've ever won.

"We're out of the nightmare now," he said, as they turned in a new direction. "Abandon hope, all ye who enter there. The Ashbys will never cease to be a miracle to me. They wormed their way out of this sort of thing. They used to come here to buy the cheapest whiskey, just as others come for the dope; and Ashby, I imagine, knows the ground floor of that hell!"

Julie pressed her nails into her hands.

"Is there any place you want to go?" Barry asked.

"Yes," she said, with a sudden feverish alertness. "Go by the markets of this district. Did it ever occur to you that they are shaped like pavilions — that they seem to represent one great pavilion — tented Asia, with throngs always moving through?"

"Do you know that though I try with my whole will, I can not go into one of them? I pass them — and something always accuses me. Ah! Don't go any nearer!" she breathed, as they approached a large market. "The beggars in their rags always come sweeping out. How festering with pestilence these throngs seem to be — gangrenous, leprous, polluted. Even the heads of little children run with sores — everywhere sores! A terrible Pavilion of mangy and vitiated humanity, shaking with unnameable curses, and with eyes and noses eaten away. They fill me

with a sinking terror, those brown masks! They smile at me — and stare at my clean whiteness like worms at a star. Oh! Why has the East been forgotten, in her blindness and her monstrous sores? Think of the wars of man against man — the great futile blood-lettings — and what their cost might have done to banish this hobgoblinism from a part of humanity! Nobody cares! I can't bear it! How can God move so slowly? Can you see the East squatting in the dust, waiting blindly through the ages for the Christ that shall come and stanch its running sores?

"You must excuse me," she said agitatedly, "but I seem always to be passing that Pavilion and, for all the horror of my pity, never able to go in and touch their sores. Does it seem to you that we are like cruelly idle and indifferent gods just looking on? Not you, but me. I can't get down to their incomprehensible and unapproachable world. I want to shove them all away out of my sight, yet all the while I'm cursing that *some one* doesn't come along and save them. Look!" she shuddered.

A leper stood in the pavilion-shaped market place, leaning like some fearful decoration against one of its posts. Large pieces of his flesh had been eaten away. Something in his appearance suggested that he was yet young. A human Prometheus, plucked by the vultures of a hideous fate. His eyes lifted to them in silent unbearable entreaty. He stretched out his handless, it seemed, for entreating money than for asking the mercy of God. Barry tossed him a coin which was instantly swept up by the supplicatory crowd.

Julie closed her eyes convulsively. "I'll always be seeing him in the Pavilion beckoning to me — but I can't go — I just can't!"

She opened her eyes and met Barry's gaze in awed silence. It was as if some unescapable burden lurked in there for their shoulders to take.

"We're in it," he said, "for good."

"I feel like a sleep-walker driven to the edge of a chasm."

"Don't be miserable," he said very gently. "We all live in night mostly, helpless on our little hills, watching the eternal worlds move by and wishing we could move our world. Look at this side of this globe! In ten thousand years while the earth has sloughed its crust, and deserts and gardens have changed places on it, man has undergone little change. It's the same morass of human souls. Does it take ten thousand years for the human glacier to move an inch?" He flicked the reins restlessly, "Are we only picking at a cell with a pin?"

"And of all Asia's static human curse, China is the worst," Julie exclaimed, "slugs cumbering up the earth, repudiating every metempsychosis."

"Ah! Personality is infinite in its range. I think you will find the Chinaman adds a little to the compass of the human soul. Do you dream that a people who chant their utterance have no imagination, or that, because they have bowed so long to fantastic tyrannies, they have no soul? I tell you that they are eating their chains through with their teeth. I'd give my life and my soul if Asia would set up a republic in the face of those worm-eaten kingdoms of Europe with their caste gradations and degradations of men, and their empirical divisions of the land of the earth. And there is a great hope upspringing, I believe — I know!"

A pretty olive-faced woman leaned out of a passing vehicle and looked at them. Barry raised his hat.

"Chad's wife, Rosalie," he explained.

"That was a big mistake, wasn't it?" Julie said.

Barry looked grave. "Poor Chad, in one of his most exalted moments of national chivalry, thought he was making a cementing marriage with the East. But, as it has turned out, it seems that there is nothing at all that he can understand about Rosalie — with her display of adornments to the world; her laxities at home, and her eternal super-abundance of rice powder. He took his wife, as so many do in the East, under a veil; and now she has grown intolerable to his Western man's soul."

They had come out onto the Luneta, where music was stirring through the soft dusk. Throngs of smart carriages and vehicles of every sort were moving in slow rhythm up and down. People were exchanging visits in the beautiful twilight. They began to stop Barry to talk to him.

Ellis Wilbur, nodding to Julie from under a vivid red plume, had her carriage brought up alongside of Barry's trap. A member of the Assembly came along, and Barry got out and fell into deep discussion with him on the walk.

"I'm *triste* to-night!" Ellis said. "The tragedy of the East has begun to fasten on me. It's time to go! Do you know, as I watch the shadows fall like slow tears over those old walls, I think what a city to be unhappy in! A city of the East, the weight of ancient evil in its stones. The dusk drops over it like a blackness of the heart, an infinite hopelessness. The petals of every gay flower shrivel, and the grass grows dim. All the forces of the night to contend against. Ah, I am sorry for all of you who are to stay in it!"

She looked closely at Julie. "Never love in the East. One could be sure of going completely mad in its terrible beautiful passions, in its heavy night with the thick scents in them and the beat of black hearts pulsing through them.

"Do you know, you and I are like Janus, at the crossroad, facing two ways; not up to going forward, not willing to go back. And there we stand like weather-vanes, and point no man a thoroughfare. I confess that I am too selfish and too impatient to make an oblation of myself. Therefore, I am definitely, but not without a certain shame, you understand, about to turn back. We are going. Father's been given another job — 'in the courts of kings.' I was too weak to resist the prospect" — she gave a short laugh — "of marrying some one princely and distinguished on the other side of the world. And I promise you, I shall not return here — like so many others. You've seen them in their dramatic farewells, leaving the East forever — its corrugating problems, its intolerable hardships. And then, after they're forgotten over here, they turn up on a ship, and embrace everybody with the tears streaming down their cheeks. It was no good, they tell you. They had to come back, and get in the game. They still don't give a rip about this part of the world, its ineffectualness and heat and hell; but what they are supremely excited about is the Job! There wasn't anything to compare with it back home. They wanted to help finish it off before the curtain was drawn, and to help show the world how successfully Asia was being vitalized."

Ellis turned her attention to Barry, and regarded him attentively for some time. "Father is worried about Barry. He thinks he is trying to break his ties

here. It would be like him, of course, to move on if he found something bigger; but he is needed here. He has a really strong influence on the people. He seems to be the only white man they really like. But he is always trailing off on strange errands all over the Eastern seas, and the queerest people are always appearing to visit him. Strange conferences are held in that house of his, I'll wager. I tell him," Ellis laughed, "that he must be trying to make himself Emperor of Asia."

She subsided into thought, out of which her voice broke quietly at last. "Does Barry McChord stir your imagination as he does mine? It's only too sure that there is nobody like him among the so-called princes of men; but he has his way marked out for him — he must beat his way alone through this black hinterland. Every bit of him is needed for the work. They are all agreed, you see, that he will no more be permitted personal passions than the Pope of Rome."

The sunset threw a golden light into the dusky cavalcade circling about them, making it glow like a wondrous human allegory. Suddenly solemn strains of music threw a hush over this vivid atmosphere.

Barry's head, Julie noticed, was uplifted to the down-coming flag — which slowly descended, the symbol of infinite things.

CHAPTER XVII

WHO is your guest?" Julie demanded, as the carriage Barry had sent after her drew up at the door of the Archibispo Street house, where he stood waiting for her.

"It wasn't he I had in mind so much as myself," he said gravely, assisting her out of the vehicle.

"Strictly speaking," he added, "the person I sent for you to meet is a king."

"A king!" cried Julie with delight. "Where did you get him?"

"He's the white rajah of an island realm to the south — an Englishman, and a fine chap. He's come to return a visit I paid him, and to find out what we Americans are up to. Ellis snatched him away as soon as she found out that he was a nobleman in England as well as a king in the East Indies. That gave me the chance I wanted to have a talk with you."

Delphine, his corsair hair on end, came to greet Julie, at the top of the stairs, and to announce that luncheon was served.

"There's to be just you and I," Barry said, "and the wife of a Spanish lawyer friend of mine, who lives across the way and who blessedly doesn't understand a word of English. Later Rajah Payne, and some people who are dropping in to meet him, will come in for tea."

They seated themselves at a small table near windows filled with waving ferns. When Señora Taliaferro, who was enamored of American cooking, had

become engrossed with the dishes served her, Barry leaned across to Julie and said abruptly:

"Sun Yat Sen has gone! He is about to start on a long march across China — on foot through Manchuria and Mongolia, preaching the gospel of freedom — and revolt. He begged me to go with him."

"You'd get killed!"

"Not on a job like that. It's got to come to pass. It's written in the stars. You don't think I'd trail carelessly off the earth and leave my job undone? Until a long time from now —" he smiled — "until I've done everything I want to do, I refuse to die."

"You see, I'm torn two ways. Sometime I shall join Sun Yat Sen. He needs me. But I have fires to tend here. The flame over there was lit from here. I'd go in a minute if I could only feel we'd turned the trick here; but the newspapers from home are full of dire forebodings. An enterprise like this must be made to sink as a fact into the consciousness of the East."

"But time is passing — by the water clock of Canton that has kept time for a thousand years!" he murmured to himself.

"Why," he demanded suddenly, "do I want to share all my secrets with you? Is it because of the light of you, that shines like a lantern in the dark of the world?"

Julie dropped her eyes. "China must be a dark world," she hazarded confusedly.

"I used to think so! I was only a lad. The people weren't people then. They were flies, hordes, multiple numbers in the universe! And the faiths of their souls! Monstrous gods, with blood drooling out of their man-eating jaws! Blood seemed a common-

place, like milk. Will I ever be able to forget that large crude yard of the execution grounds — running with blood that stifled the nostrils and caused me to reel with illness — human blood, rivers of it, turning black? Terrible was the human capitulation of that field! That submissively surrendered stream showed the Chinaman in a new light; for not much of the blood of the Execution Grounds was criminal. That kind could get away with bribes. It was ferociously demanded blood of sacrifice — the blood of gophers offered to that figment in Pekin. Why should these wet, reasonless, red spots continue on the earth? You see that something must happen over there soon.

“A flat, bare, yellow, ancient land!” he mused. “The saddest land I have ever seen, with little vegetation to cover its old bones — just the stark drear plains. Isn’t nature brutal, to turn out millions and millions of creatures to subsist on dead mountains and sand. And, lifting like excrescences out of that land, the mud huts of the living mingle with the mud tombs of the dead. Gophers in mud banks, living and dead. Nowhere else does one ache so for man. And the intolerable sensations one experiences at first over this monstrous dirt-like cheapness of human life!”

“All our lives,” Julie reflected, “we have looked upon ourselves as a little less than God; but over here we are just rats crawling in and out of the universe!” Her face contracted in a painful spasm.

“Don’t put them too far down in the abyss of your pity, though they were in the beginning a hideous phantom across the vision of my ideals. Pekin, of course, was different. It was all that I had dreamed of ancient and opulent Cathay: an oriental fantasy with its great Chaldean towers, its temples and pagodas

sparkling with sapphire lights; with its marble courts, its flashing scarlet palaces; its grottos on lotus lakes, its gay pailows with flapping banners, and its millions of rainbow-hued boxes that are the dwellings of men. But, over beyond the city, cut into the clay of the cliffs — the holes of the gophers still!”

Barry's eyes had become abstracted under his memories.

“And the Forbidden City! No more to be penetrated than heaven itself! From Coal Hill one gazed across at that shimmering Hearsay among men, that Holy of Holies protected by walls as thick as Babylon's. Over there amid legendary splendor, and unparalleled power on earth, in high and inviolate courts to which no gopher ever crawled, is harbored a will-o'-the-wisp — a myth, a spell, that governs millions of gophers' fates.

“But —” he brought his hand heavily down on the table — “the gopher down under the ground is eating away with his teeth the foundations of those impenetrable places and you yet shall witness the day when he will stand up, a man at last, in the forbidden courts of the earth.”

“It all sounds a fantasy of mud-caked gophers, hobgoblins and blood!” Julie said.

“Listen, for sometime you will see all I say come true,” he prophesied. “All over the world to-day as laborers, and down under the earth in tin mines, Chinamen are slaving and groveling to make the money to set China free. When the hour comes, that hoarded treasure will flow forth to turn the tide. The gophers under the ground are stirring to resurrection. To the day, Julie,” — he lifted his glass — “when the gophers all over the world shall find the sky!”

Julie stared at him wistfully, and suddenly the tears rushed to her eyes — tears of awe, envy, and humility. He was in the toils of great undertakings, sweeping on to sacred achievements, while her sole contribution was Nahal — Nahal of dismal failure and miscarried efforts. What was the thing that he had, and that she would never have, that brought him fulfillment — the thing that his friends wished to conserve and to keep her out of?

"I like to think," she said at last, hiding her emotion, "that you will be invulnerable to everything that can happen in the East."

"Why the East?"

"It has a separate, harder and more cruel fate."

"And presents greater gifts and will bring in the end greater strength! Come!" He rose. "We have sat a long time, and I hear our monarch arriving below."

"Tell me how to speak to him!"

"We call him Sir John. In his island kingdom they call him Rajah John. He is the second of his dynasty. The people of the realm very charmingly invited his father to rule over them. He lives in a stucco palace of the most monstrous taste. He would prefer to live on his estate in England, but one must rule a kingdom whether one wants to or not."

"Is he married?"

"Aha!" He turned round upon her suddenly. "I see that I should not have brought you here to-day. He is not, and it might take only the tiniest twist of fate to-day to make you a queen in the East. But please to remember that maybe some of the rest of us can win kingdoms, too. I implore of you not to let that prophecy drop out of your mind."

Ellis Wilbur entered the sala with a pleasant faced, deeply browned young Englishman. Upon being presented to Julie he looked at her admiringly, which caused Ellis to cry out:

"King John has lived so long in polygamous countries that he has imbibed their inspirations, I perceive. After assigning me first chance at his kingdom, he is casting pleasantly encouraging glances elsewhere!"

Isabel, Chad, Commissioner Caples and several young Englishmen that Barry had asked to meet his guest strolled in. Commissioner Caples demonstrated an unpleasantly prophetic mood. The business pulse, he said, was the sure indication of what was going to transpire; the big concerns were withdrawing their capital from the islands faster than ever. People who had invested in the chimera would lose everything, for Independence was imminent.

At this Julie saw Isabel's eyes blaze with ecstasy.

"Great pity!" Sir John commented. "I'll miss your Experiment to the North. I was planning things myself — along the same lines. Tell me," — he turned to address Isabel — "what will happen to the poor *tao*, lumbering after his *carabao* in the jungle, I say what will become of him then?"

"He has just about as much brains as his *carabao*," Isabel contemptuously flashed. "It isn't necessary to concern oneself with a *carabao's* fate."

"Doesn't it strike you, Mrs. Armistead, that these dumb, blinded creatures under the new impulse here have started out on a quest for manhood?"

"The dumb and blind cannot lead a country. That will take a great strength!"

"But do you, Mrs. Armistead, see that strength anywhere about you?"

For an instant Isabel looked to Julie like one who had stepped suddenly into a dark room. Then the fire of her eyes flashed across the sala.

"Exactly," said Sir John in a whimsical undertone. He had followed her glance to where it unconsciously alighted. "Why shouldn't there be two white kings in the East?"

Isabel turned from him sharply.

CHAPTER XVIII

JULIE moved quickly, to hide any appearance of having heard what had so extraordinarily transpired. That flash of words and glances had disturbed every cell of her mind. She was still quivering when Isabel spoke at her elbow.

"Julie, I never saw any one who let herself be so eaten up by things. You are as white as a ghost. Is it," she turned to look more closely at Julie, "the head again?"

Julie looked back at her, troubled. "Oh, yes," she said, "it aches all the time."

"And have you done nothing about it?"

The girl looked embarrassed. "The doctors might want to open me up, to find out what is the matter. Besides, they charge what Father Hull calls American prices."

"Better keep away from them," Isabel agreed, turning away.

Barry's guests, with their tea-cups in their hands, sauntered through the rooms, examining his collections. The object of greatest interest was a bright red chair gleaming like coals of fire, with in-set golden dragons.

"The throne of the East!" Ellis explained. "Red lacquer, glazed all over with poison, and as ancient as Solomon. Emperors have sat in it, and the devil himself; and because of it execution grounds have run red."

Observing Isabel staring intently at the chair, Com-

missioner Caples playfully remarked: "Indeed and you'd look very pretty in it, my dear — with a tower of jewels on your head and a fringe of pearls hanging down over your eyes, so that nobody could have an inkling of what you were about. We'd have another splendid Dowager."

The guests drifted out to the various engagements evening always brought. Sir John went to his room to read his letters.

Barry beckoned to Julie. "There is something I want to show you!" All afternoon there had been in his manner the intimation of showing his things especially to her.

She followed him into a room, where he pointed out a large framed picture of the Wall of China going over the mountains into Manchuria. Instantly there sprang before her mind the vision of it climbing in the evening light the steep foot-hills, up to the dark tops of the mountains, where its splendid watch towers rose like a crown against the sky.

"It's a segment of the human mind, in stone!" she breathed.

He pointed to a gate tower set high upon the Wall. "The Gate of the World looking out upon Asia! It is far beyond there that Sun Yat Sen is shortly to march afoot, secretly, on his mission — to shake an empire. I'd give my soul to go! For what other life could offer a thing like that?"

He turned on a light, and abruptly pulled out some camphor chests. Opening them up, he tossed out their contents. Julie dropped down on her knees and watched the rare fabrics flow forth: lustrous brocades, and cobweb tissues, sparkling with jeweled lights. He unlocked carved and scented ivory boxes, and chains

of amethysts like drops of wine trembled out in a thin stream; then came sapphires like blue winking eyes of the night, and a little sack of pearls that took Julie's breath wholly away.

"Am I in Ali Baba's treasure cave?" she exclaimed.

He smiled. "I have seen Ali Baba's treasure cave, in Ceylon. There is a certain shop there which has been kept by generations of a family. Indian princes go to Ali Sherif for their jewels. Lots of these things I got there for prices unheard of in Europe. When I passed through last, Ali Sherif was celebrating his son's marriage. I fell to praising some of the jewels of the native prince, and, stirred by the mood of the day, Ali invited me to go with him into the underground vaults of his house. There on the floors of those cellars were fabulous hills that blazed up under his torch into every incredible kind of gleaming sun — all garnered and stored away there by generations of jewel-smiths."

Julie picked up and held admiringly in her hand a dazzling medallion of white jade with a single hieroglyphic carved upon it.

"That's supposed to be a whale of a charm!" Barry explained, observing her fascination. "Belonged to the Imperial family. I got it at the same time I got the chair. Caples always insists that nothing short of a crime on my part could have brought either of them into my possession; but fleeing princes will part with anything for a chance at life."

He drew a thin chain from one of the boxes, passed it through the hole that was pierced in the piece of jade, and slipped it around her neck. "There you have a charm from the Lama's Temple in Lhasa.

And there isn't a charm in Asia to beat its power. There's scarcely a Mongolian that won't bow down to it. I'll have a catch fixed for it, and send it to you."

Julie, seated among these riches, smiled up at him, to find his whole being concentrated upon her in an intense look that lifted her out of herself into a new personality so thrillingly comprehensive that it seemed in touch with a world of vivid inspirations. Bonds seemed momentarily to be cut behind her; she felt herself slipping on wings into high areas. All about her, agitating her soul to its depths, was this great wordless offering.

Chad and Isabel had not left. Chad, who had a poetic passion for oriental art, had become absorbed in some rare vases which Barry had recently received from China. Isabel, between moments of fitful contemplation of the red chair, stirred restlessly about, contriving in her movements to reconnoiter along the gallery into the adjoining room. Turning her eyes back warily upon the preoccupied Chad, she every now and then leaned around the wall between the two doors, and obtained glimpses of what was taking place between Barry and Julie. Her dark head, listening acutely, was stealthily thrust forward and withdrawn like the head of some tropical serpent.

Chad uttered some remark, and she slipped quickly back. He glanced up, and his gaze became transfixed with amazed repugnance. After all, the creatures of the East were black-hearted bats, he thought. Rosalie had been sufficiently disillusioning, but here was Isabel — who had always stood to his mind as a racial justification — looking like the root of all evil.

"Come here!" she persuaded.

He put down the vase and followed her, but the stealth in her movements irritated him; and when she whispered tensely for him to look through the door toward which she was drawing him, he was inclined to rebel. But what he saw appeared wholly to chain his attention. He stared in silence for a moment at the two figures beyond, then veered back with a suppressed curse.

Isabel was breathing hard. "You know about those chests!" she exclaimed. "They are a fancy of his. He has been filling them a long time — for a woman — *the* woman! We did not want any woman to come, did we, and overturn his existence?"

He scowled. "What do you mean?"

"I mean his destiny — his work," she cried passionately. "You know what I mean. Nobody must get in his way!"

"You don't think that Barry — and that cobweb of a girl!" Then he muttered fiercely. "Barry shan't throw himself away too!"

"And she's wrapped up in another man. She was about to be married to him down South, but they quarreled."

"Barry's career has no place in it for any woman — least of all for her." Chad seemed to be arguing with himself, or the universe. "Why should this moonlit wraith come along and attempt to throw everything into an eclipse? What would he amount to after she got into his soul?" He appealed to Isabel: "Isn't there any way to get her out of his path?"

Isabel's features set into a mask. "She's in the way!" she repeated vehemently. She glanced at Chad sharply to fathom how deep his meaning went.

"Resurrect the other man!" he hazarded desperately. "Barry shan't be caught in this undertow! I've prayed like a Parsee that he would keep out!"

At that moment Barry and Julie appeared in the doorway. The two gazed at them, wondering.

"I'm going to drive Miss Dreschell home!" Chad suddenly announced. "She never takes the trouble to talk to me, so I am going to seize this chance."

As they drove together through the twilight, it became clear to Julie that Chad had set himself to some psychological investigation. She was aware that in floating into his circle of life, she had aroused in him some inexplicable distrust.

What he managed to evolve after a bit was that in order that Barry should meet the peculiar hazards of his career, it was expedient for him to remain single-hearted. Ellis Wilbur, Julie recalled, amid her contending emotions, had said exactly the same thing. Was everybody in the East a self-appointed guardian over Barry's emotions? It gave her a feeling of being floated persistently away from his existence.

No, Barry must not be carried under by the current of stressful emotions, as Chad painfully intimated he himself had been. He contrived to make clear that what he chiefly resented in Julie was a certain disturbingly inefficacious flame of being, which he took occasion to compare to a light-house open to the winds of the seas.

He did not deny, now that she was under observation, the starry quality of her substance, but he regarded it as nothing more than an accident of soul. Nothing ever would come from it, and Barry, he pointed out, would be led astray by it, would follow in its futile trail, a blind lopped-off scrap of the sun.

"After a while," he continued, with the same extraordinary frankness, "after you've dipped a finger in the pie, you will go right back to the doing of endlessly inconsequential things and Barry, perhaps you know, is committed to going on." Julie understood that he referred to Barry's secret activities outside the islands.

She regarded him gloomily. "I think you are perfectly right in assuming that nothing I shall ever do will bear fruit. Once I tried to pull the fire down out of the skies to light a few little clods of earth, but the creatures only thought it was to burn them up."

"I think you will find that you pulled down that fire to make a halo for your own head. For all your hallowed way, you came into the East hunting tremendous things for yourself."

Julie colored angrily. "I've seen for a long time that you don't like me, but I find no justification for an insult!"

Chad's tone changed. "I am not trying to do that. It isn't that I dislike you — but that I wish you hadn't happened." A tense earnestness broke out on his harassed face. "How can I make you understand about Barry! What is it that fills the atmosphere here? What do you feel in the air?"

"Belief — burning belief in the work," Julie dejectedly replied.

"Yes, but mixed up with it, as there is mixed up in every high impulse in man, you find the darker strain. Read the mood of this place, and in it you will find expectation — human expectation, everywhere high. Look at Isabel, for its greatest extravagance!"

"Yes," Julie agreed, "she looks and talks as if she

lived in the greatest expectation of an extraordinary climax for herself."

"And that's what in differing degrees they all expect. The high, clear strain is working for the cause, and working hard, but the dark strain is using this place as a training ground for personal power. Take those people you met the other night at Isabel's: Holborne — he's a prime fighter, but do you think he'll not desert the field when some other background offers to set Holborne off to better advantage? And Leah Chamberlain — what but a play-ground of the passions is this to her? And to Ellis Wilbur, what but a rough struggle that she won't engage in, for fear of getting hurt? I could name you a lot of others to illustrate how this priceless and incorporeal endeavor, this Republic of the Sun — which is a movement to take hold of the heart of the East, and not a South African or Klondike gold-fields rush serves solely for the aggrandizement of human personalities."

He paused, and looked at her keenly. "So when you see one simple, splendid exception, you've just got to hang on to it by your teeth! Outside of Father Hull, there is just one person in this whole Archipelago who has sought nothing, absolutely nothing for himself. He has never had a ruling prince's job, though the Government has often to go and get him when it's in a pinch. Though he's the best known man in the Islands, he's never dreamed of making himself into a political power — He's just the 'Mayor of Manila' — a wholly make-believe title,* since there's no such thing; but I know of no personality that by scattering itself freely has come into such an accrue-ment of power.

"That's what sets him apart. That's what through

all contingencies will cause him to survive — because neither fate nor God can get along without an agency like that."

To hide her emotion Julie looked out into the dusk. Again Nahal, with all its eternal futility, arose like a bar to the universe. In vain she tried to push the vision off her horizon: there, she knew, it would stand always as the total of her spirit's achievement.

Chad went on, but with less assurance now. "I have heard that there is — that there might be another factor in this thing. Perhaps it could happily be made the determining one. I refer to — the other man. Couldn't he be hurried along? This is absolutely his moment. I offer you my assistance in every way, to make it clear to him that this is the time to step in."

Julie threw him a sharply amazed glance. "Why should Isabel have repeated that? How can you talk about things you don't understand? I needn't answer you, of course, but I will. The man you speak of is never coming back. Nobody but Isabel would have dreamed of such a thing."

"Then why sit in this dark thrall and wait for him?"

Julie drew away in fresh surprise. "Could it occur to you that this probing might become painful?" She put her hands to her head. "But it's because I don't blame you greatly that I reply at all." She lifted her head, and looked at him with a great earnestness. "You found out that I was — waiting; but you didn't know for what. I'll tell you now," she almost sobbed. "I wanted to be released from the dark, brutal spell of failure — I wanted to recapture a last territory of my soul."

After he had left Julie at her gate, Chad drove to Isabel's house. Isabel was one of Chad's best friends. Beautiful and seductive as an houri, she was surrounded in both his mind and Barry's with the romance and tragedy of an unappeased Kundry soul. Her fallen ambitions among her father's race touched them. They were haunted by the cruel fact that the East alone offered a destiny; and though she was their antagonist, they courted and admired her. Her wild aspirations they had credited to her natural mental opulence, and her environment. Recent events, however, were tending to shake some of their comfortable convictions.

The houses of the East are open, and there are no bells. Dicky-Dicky, the dwarf, whose duty it was to stand on guard at the stair case, was nowhere about when Chad arrived. He climbed the stairs and, completely at home, sat down on the railing of the gallery, and looked at the river, the view of which from this point was always enchanting.

A light burned in the sala, but the rest of the house appeared to be in darkness. Isabel, no doubt, had not reached home. He would wait for her.

Voices from somewhere back of him floated indistinctly at first across his thoughts. Then, as the sounds became clearer, and arresting in their significance, his attention focused. In his long sojourn in the islands he had picked up the use of the Tagalog dialect. He heard an exclamation, and recognized the voice as Isabel's.

"And so this pilgrimage of spells and charms, and working upon lives, goes on, Witch of Arayat!"

Chad pricked up his ears instantly. The Witch of

Arayat had been a fantastic legend when he at first came to the islands. From the obscurity of the years, Isabel had evidently raised to life her spell-casting mother.

"The march is long," a fainter voice replied. "First I sought the Covenant in the Golden Ark on the Sacred Mountain. Now I seek it all over the earth. Why have you sent for me?"

"When one greatly needs, one sends for one's mother."

"I gave you all when I left."

"I sent for you to work a spell for me! I want Paradise, my Mother. But my hands can not reach it. So I have sent for you to help me."

Isabel was capable of reverting to the superstition of her blood! To win her aspirations, whatever they might be, she had resurrected the Charm-Woman. They were all like that. Rosalie had told him that in order to win his love she had steadily taken magic potions.

The voices died down for a moment. Chad sat wondering. He fancied he saw a tremor in the curtains that screened Isabel's apartment. Two words of the droning syllables back flared audible again.

"A medicine!"

Chad stirred uneasily. He did not wish to hear about any more potions. Just then from the spot where he had seen the curtains tremble, Dicky-Dicky the dwarf emerged hurriedly and passed without seeing him.

"He's been listening!" Chad concluded. Eavesdropping was a common oriental pastime; but the appearance of the dwarf indicated that he had understood

something in that interview beyond that Chad had not. What mischief were Isabel and her mother up to? Some new political scheming, perhaps.

Suddenly Isabel, her face like a spot of darkness against the lighted room, appeared. Chad rose startled, as if some black whirlwind were approaching him. Here was the passion of the Levant that he always veiled — that dreadful ravening primeval force that assailed and overthrew his ideals. Of course, innately, he had always expected Isabel to be like this. He knew instinctively that she was a volcano around which they had sat in false peace.

Something had shaken terribly Isabel's exotic universe. Some secret word had come perhaps of the bursting of the bubble — hers and Orcullu's. Whatever this emotion was, it broke from deeper sources than he could divine. It took him several moments to open his mouth in the face of it.

"I stopped to tell you that I have talked with the girl, and I fear that there is no use trying to get that other man back."

He paused, finding it difficult to refer to the sensibilities of his own race. They appeared to lift like inconsequential bubbles before this inconceivable mood.

But that fierceness continued to make demand upon him. "It's too bad," he added. "The affair turns out to be merely a tryst with her own soul. But —" He tried to get Barry's name out, and failed. What he wanted to do was to reassure their mutual fears concerning Barry, and to declare confidently that Barry would keep clear of the complication. Instead, he found himself edging toward the stairs while that gathering dreadfulness followed him.

He descended without looking behind him, but he

could see through the back of his head Isabel's image, while ahead of him Rosalie's rice-powdered face seemed to wave across his path; and in that moment he thanked God that he had never begotten children of the East.

CHAPTER XIX

IN her school in the Tondo, Julie was required to supervise as well as to teach. Her two native assistants, Mariana and Clarino, however, were the two most sacerdotally devout worshipers before the Ark of Education that she had ever seen.

Her own class consisted of boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and sixteen — maturity for Malays. Reports of cholera were now steadily coming from the provinces, and Julie made it her chief concern to impress upon her pupils the precautions they should take to guard themselves against it. She read aloud the ominous accounts of what was transpiring in the provincial districts, and strove to move them to active interest. Against the River — the lurking monster in their lives — she warned them most passionately, and exhorted them to the point of prayer against all manner of uncooked food.

The answer of the ages came back to her through the medium of these young creatures. The River had been there always — since before Abraham. It was God's own river, and it could not therefore do harm. And the things of the soil — they grew at His will; would they then poison the sons of men? Thereupon followed the fiat, old as time, the fiat of the God of the Pavilion: "If we are to die, we will die!"

Julie's headaches had become a serious menace. In fact, in conjunction with the devitalizing climate, they were, she saw with trepidation, fast sucking out her strength. She was now spending five straight hours

in the school-room, beginning at eight in the morning; then, after a short interim of rest, she went to Señor Sansillo's for the afternoon. In order to defray her expenses and to meet her obligations, she must inexorably keep going all the time. She could not afford to be ill: she had not one cent to be ill with, or any one to turn to in this great awful East. Barry, she felt, was the only creature she could lean upon; but she had a pronounced aversion to appealing to him or to any one else. Very vivid in her memory was the recollection of a time when, in direst trouble, she had put out her hands and they had closed on empty space. That experience had engendered in her a bitter resolve to stand or fall on her own resources. Never again, she felt, would she completely trust any one. Secretly and somberly she believed in her heart that men would break any covenant, if they could do so without incurring the judgment of the world.

For some time Julie had noticed standing either in the road or in the stall of Pietro Poro opposite her window, an old woman, who always stared into the distance as if she were stone — with that fashion of patience these people had when they were waiting for something to come to pass. She was withered and darkened, as if she had traveled through endless hot winds. She always carried in front of her a flat basket like a tray, which was supported by a cord bound round her head.

When Julie asked the native teachers what the old woman was waiting for, Mariana, the more imaginative one, replied that she was not waiting for any one. that she was "watching the world go by." Mariana thought she was a caster of spells; but male common sense asserted itself in Clarino, who explained that

she was a herb-woman. Julie had not before seen a vendor of this type, but she remembered odd little bundles of dried leaves that had been sold as medicine in the fairs of Nahal — for it was only at such celebrations that Guindulman had displayed an open market. She recalled how Gregorio used to bring these mysterious bundles home and munch at them as a remedy for some impalpable disorganization which he professed to feel in his gorilla-like frame. When one day she had asked him their utility, his reply had been a vigorous pass across his vital organs and a gustatory declaration, "*Mucho bueno!*" She also knew that most of the ladies of the garrison had used a highly efficacious soapy bark for shampooing; it had saved more than one head of hair.

One afternoon when Julie descended the steps, she found the old woman at the door. She held up a small bundle, and murmured something to Mariana and Clarino, who were behind Julie. She had said something to the natives, that put her goods in an adventurous light, and they bent interestedly over her basket. While she flung monosyllables at them, she looked keenly at Julie.

Something that flashed out of her glances startled Julie; a glimpse of a myriad of human things leaped out of this herb-vendor's face as out of a well — dark-nesses, cruelties, sublimities, and a kind of burning thirst, as if this old thing were a traveler on the deserts of the universe hunting for a spring.

Mariana and Clarino passed on, and the old woman, whose eyes were upon Julie in their distant yet riveted gaze, spoke to her in Spanish. She asked Julie very soberly if she knew where the Covenant could be found.

Julie was stupendously amazed, but before she could reply, the old woman went on to say that she had sought the Covenant on the tops of high mountains and across strange lands. She said that Julie had a light in her face that would lead to it, and that if she would come with her they would find it together.

A fantastic little thrill of exaltation shot through the girl. It was the strangest, the most unaccountable, and the most preposterous offer she had ever had made her. She smiled as she shook her head a little pensively — the youth in her a little sad at refusing any mystic adventure.

The old woman was watching her. Standing in the beating sun, her brows had contracted spasmodically.

"You are bad in the head?"

Julie nodded. "The sun did it, some time ago."

The herb-woman caught up something which she opened to Julie in the palm of her hand. "It will take away the headache." She pressed the modicum upon the girl, in the insistent native way. "Try it, Señorita. Never has it failed to stop pain."

Julie hesitated.

"Look — this I give to you to try. I give it without payment, knowing that when you have tested it you will want more.

Julie's hand closed slowly over the gift. The old woman and her basket dropped away.

On her way home, Julie passed through the Escolta, where Rosalie Messenger invited her into her carriage. Julie had met Rosalie at Isabel's; and in the Escolta she met her casually and often, because Julie frequently took that route home from Señor Sansillo's, and Rosalie was always flitting restlessly up and down the street like a tired butterfly. Rosalie usually

stopped her carriage to take Julie in, then up and down the narrow ancient thoroughfare they would move, in the human current of new and old races, before Rosalie drove her home.

To-day Julie was more grateful than ever when Rosalie picked her up, for the heat was fearfully oppressive. Julie dropped back in the seat, and pressed her hands to her aching head, while Rosalie, a tropical person who appeared to have passed through a magic immunity at birth, craned her small head at the passers-by.

On a corner they caught a glimpse of Barry, his tall form lifted energetically above the heated procession, the grasp of the colony in his face. He was visualizing, Julie thought, far-off peoples marching under many banners beneath the sun. As they passed him, a bitter look flashed across Rosalie's oriental face.

Noticing Julie's attitude of discomfort, Rosalie withdrew her attention from the street. "The headache still? You suffer from it always!"

Julie nodded. "It's getting so now it seldom stops. That horrible sunstroke blistered my brain. Listen, Rosalie"—she sat up—"an old woman has been coming to my school selling herbs. She has a medicine that she says will stop my headaches. Do you think there is anything in such remedies? I am getting desperate; for, you see, I'm not like you who can drive around in a carriage all your life."

"What was the old woman like?" Rosalie asked.

"Oh, in the distance she's just any old woman, but up close not like anybody at all. She seemed very anxious to have me try the medicine—in fact, she gave me some of it to try. Do you believe in such things?"

The mestiza shifted in her seat, but did not at once reply. At last, looking abstractedly at the horses' glistening backs, she said, "There are wise old women — who effect cures."

"She says odd things." Julie hesitated. "She talked about a Covenant — and a high mountain."

"Ah!" Rosalie breathed. Then she turned about abruptly. "And will you try the medicine?"

"Have you ever known people to take such remedies?"

Rosalie nodded with conviction. "If you understood our people, you would know that nearly all buy, and believe in them. I have known these herb preparations to help greatly. Why shouldn't they? Most of the specifics of the Pharmacopœia grow wild here."

"It sounds interesting," Julie reflected. "I'll try her cure, anyway. Then if I don't get better, I'll go to a doctor — and have more debts to pay!"

A few days later, she stopped Rosalie's passing carriage and said to her: "I have been taking some of the old woman's remedy. It really helps me. One can learn a lot from the East."

Delphine appeared occasionally at the school, to see his *Maestra*; always diplomatically choosing school hours for his visits. He reported that he was getting on very well, that the Señor Barry had bought him beautiful new clothes, and that Dicky-Dicky was his sworn friend and guardian. He was teaching the dwarf English — out of the very books which his *Maestra* had used with him. Dicky-Dicky learned thirstily, because he believed that some day this knowledge would help him out. They talked much, Delphine said, of Nahal, and the dwarf always seemed troubled

about the *Maestra's* treatment there, and took great satisfaction in the thought that his sister had upheld her in her trials.

The carelessly generous remuneration of her pupil, Señor Sansillo, aroused in Julie the vision of paying off the debt with which she had come saddled into the New World, and which had been the source of so many of her misfortunes.

Señor Sansillo lived in one of the most pretentious mansions of the Walled City. He was a lawyer of large interests; in fact, out of sheer adventurousness, he was interested financially in almost every large commercial enterprise in the islands. A large suite of rooms in the *entresuelo*, or downstairs portion of his residence, served as his offices. These were palatially furnished with the elaborate acquisitions of many pilgrimages throughout the East.

He was of a splendid family in Spain, whose impoverishment had driven him out to seek his fortune in the colonies. At some time or other in his history, he had been attached to the court of a Spanish princess of the royal family, and he had a manner in keeping with that distinction. It was the fact of his having been forced to disclose the existence of his mestiza wife that had kept him back, like so many others, in the arms of the tolerant East. Señora Sansillo had been one of the richest "*hijas del país*," and it was upon the foundation of her wealth that his great insular fortune had been reared.

In appearance he was the most carefully correct man Julie had ever seen, his endless varieties of apparel all being obtained from a famous tailor in Paris. He was tall, as sharply slender as the blade of a knife; of almost ferocious activity, with a face on which emo-

tions seethed as in a hot lake. Among the crude, blunt, sweating figures of the Colony, the Señor's personal exquisiteness stood strangely forth. Why, in such unamenable surroundings, he should still care to preserve this high fineness of existence, Julie often wondered. He would step forth from his great carriage, with its jingling silver harnessing, upon the pavement of the crowded, heterogeneous Luneta precisely as he would have emerged upon his favorite Boulevard. He carried this fastidious grace with him into his business, and was actually noble in his refusal to lower even here his æsthetic attitude. Rather than take off his coat of dignity and get down and struggle in the dirt, however metaphorically, he would lose any amount of money, and snap his Castilian fingers after it. That did not mean, however, that he consistently lost in his enterprises. He was much too brilliant and too versed in the refinements of mental strategy for that.

He was, Julie soon discovered, inordinately fond of telling "*anecdotas*." These recitals were usually of a delicate double meaning, and Julie could hear his clients in the law office adjoining her room constantly breaking into gales of laughter. The Señor would appear for his lesson with the tears of appreciation standing in his eyes. While wiping them reverently away with a large silk handkerchief, he would assure Julie condolingly that she had the sense of humor of a Pilgrim Father. When she could not understand his stories in Spanish, he turned them, wickedly twinkling, into French; and when there, happily for her, the point missed her, he would twirl his delicate fingers toward the window and appear to beckon the whole world into the joke.

The Señor had the Latin's abysmal contempt for English — a clumsy language, he declared it, without science or charm; and his lessons were like so many brief, reluctant plunges into a cold bath, they were really the last thing on earth that concerned him. English! Yes, he was resolved to learn it, but any detestable time would answer. As there were no suitable books that Julie could find for the instruction of adults, she brought a few from school. It was the Señor's practice, while she was trying to teach him and while he wanted to tell stories, to pick up gingerly between thumb and forefinger an offending First Reader that had been pored over by many a brownie, and, shaking its leaves contemptuously, exclaim: "Is it within the limits of reason as conceived in your admirable head that a grown man in complete possession of his senses can endure a thing like this: 'The cat ate the rat: Spell *cat*, *rat*, also *bat*, *hat*, and *mat*' — Bah!"

At four o'clock, in deference to her Anglo-Saxon nationality, tea would be served. It was of such an extraordinarily reprehensible character that Julie at first had to be told what it was. Nobody in the Señor's house was familiar with tea-making, and least of all the native cook. From what Julie could gather from the Señor, a handful of tea-leaves was boiled, like spinach, to pulp and added to a mixture of condensed milk and brown sugar. The Señor sipped his tiny glass of cognac and watched in wonder while Julie heroically made away with the concoction. "The English are an enigmatic race," he reflected. "The Bank of England, the bank of the world, you understand, stops work every day in the calendar in order that every soul in it may of this fearful fluid imbibe."

Upstairs his family lived. Señora Sansillo was a

sweet-faced woman of the stout mestiza type; dressed when she went out in screaming brocades and plumes, and when she stayed in scarcely dressed at all. Her husband referred to her in a respectfully disinterested way as "Eustefa" and as of "heavenly temperament." Why of her own free will she should wish to be so good, he could not think. "As for me—I am a *diablo!*" he would thoughtfully add, twirling his Mephistophelian mustaches.

His children were attractive and intelligent, but they had upon them the indefinable Malay stamp. Alongside their father's sharply defined frame, they looked as if they had somehow been cast in wax. Children of the sun! Columbines of a tropical garden! Sometimes Julie would see the Señor pick up the youngest, a little brown will-o'-the-wisp, and after looking her over searchingly thrust her down with an inarticulate exclamation.

In time, the herb-woman's medicine seemed to have proved for Julie to be a veritable panacea. It helped her to work and to sleep. At night when her whole body quivered with fatigue and rivers of weariness coursed over her frame, it was an agency of relief. It was not only a refuge from suffering, but it was also a reserve against over-strain; it helped her to go through the second part of the day, which was the intolerable part. Rising from inadequate rest with the dragging sensation of coming up out of the water with the weight of the world about her neck, and facing the compulsion of crossing the scorching city to battle with the intractable Señor, she gained from the medicine fresh spurts of strength. Sometimes, even, she seemed to come alive to a new world, from which armies of doubts and despairs had fled, and which was

invested with the rosiest plans for her drab and clearly indeterminate future. Sometimes she rose to a superb tolerance of mood in which mere human happenings were but tracteries on dust.

With hard work and increasing bad health, Julie gradually saw less of the acquaintances she had made. Isabel and Ellis were the Empire's more fortunate women, claiming its brilliant and leisurely phases, whereas she was drifting farther and farther into insignificance. Father Hull was in Hong Kong making an attempt to rehabilitate his health. Barry, as things were drawing to a crisis for the Americans, was off over the Islands everywhere, striving desperately to stir up sentiment against evacuation and feverishly attempting to finish off some projects before the end.

A building era had struck the centers of the Archipelago and he was egging the natives on to materialize their aspirations. He always came to see Julie at once upon his brief returns to Manila, bringing with him some little trophy of the trip. They would sit together under the fire-trees in the Reredos' garden, with the little flames of blossoms, lying about them in the grass while he recounted his adventures. Other cities beautiful, he said were springing up. Legaspi had a regular citadel of imposing public edifices under way. San Fernando, Pampanga, had voted a splendid public square of modern cement buildings. Solano, sepulchered dust of the Conquistadores, was being rapidly lifted from its tomb; an earthquake had come along and by spilling part of the ancient city had greatly aided Orcullu in his attempt to rear a new commercial port.

An earthquake had in fact shaken the whole archipelago; there was a great eruptive attempt to join in

the march of modern progress. The Americans, Barry informed her, had made over waterways, harbors, and cities, developed vast tracts of forest, established new trade routes, roads, a railway, organized industries and, in a manner of godlike benevolence never attempted at home, were supervising the health, morals, education and welfare of the entire race. The big things were chugging through. One corner of the East anyway, after a great deal of phenomenal pushing, was beginning to stir. Imperishable cities were beginning to rear their heads, not alone at the instigation of the Americans but at the incentive of the natives themselves, out of whose local resources and exuberant good will, the new cities were being built.

While Barry pondered expansively under the fire tree, starting up sometimes to tread the grass as if it were springs, Julie sat quietly rapt and listened. She loved terribly these big things in which she could have no part. She would clasp and unclasp her hands in suppressed emotion while this splendid, transported Odysseus, his desert face glowing like furnace gold, his great youthful frame energizing the dusk as he moved, recited the achievements of the Argonauts. Always there was some burning agitation in his soul. As he walked and talked he would stir his hair wildly in his characteristic fashion. Julie loved to watch him in moments like this, for at such times only she was completely happy. Her soul seemed to ask for nothing more, as if for the moment it were filled with realized dreams.

"Ah!" she once exclaimed, in a glory of satisfaction. "You never could get pinned down to the dust like the rest of us. You could stay in this Lions' Den forever and come out unscathed."

"If I did get down, remember, Julie, I should look to you."

"Because I know so much about the earth — the hard ground floor of it? It seems somehow to have a natural affinity for me." She reflected ruefully.

He stared off a while at the starry horizon. "We're agents of the inevitable. America, like Christianity, Julie, is one of the biggest things in human history. The two of them are victories of the soul of men."

"Even old China," he went on, "caught from America the reflection of democracy. But what she gleaned sank down crosswise into her poor old brain, and she broke out into a muddling chaotic geyser that she mis-conceived as a revolt.

"But, howsoever muddlesomely, Asia has made a beginning. She has kicked up, never afterwards really to settle down. The habit of mind of ages has been thrown off. You think I am a wild prophet, but I have read secret tumults in the souls of men that later shall take sure shape. The underground fire will spread, and you will some day see China break out through every crack of her blistered, old surface. Then we shall be able to say that we have done our work!"

Barry's manner suddenly altered. The triumph of his mood faded. "Julie, the end will come here though, if these people persist. They dare to risk so soon the human republicanism we've sweated for. In this black chaos of famine and plague they want to stand alone. Have they forgotten the big brute bulks that shadow this horizon? the lions and the panthers coming out of the dark to devour them? The work of our hearts — in the dust!" He clenched his hands.

"Congress will pass the Bill. It will be lights out

here before long — our carefully trimmed lights. We will have to move to new beats in the East."

He caught her hand and walked with her to the gate, where, turning about to face her, he said with deep emotion: "The cities of my heart may pass, the fires that my life has lighted die, but you will remain in my soul the one eternally abiding thing."

Long after the gate had closed behind him, Julie, the light all about her, stood pondering those words. Like a prophecy of fire, her soul saw them — like a glowing handwriting on the walls of fate, burning characters predicting a future — a future in which far desert peoples were concerned, and shining human deeds. An immortal experience was about to offer itself out of her frustrated land of dreams.

She felt, as she sat there alone in the moonlight, as if she had been summoned off her futile earth to occupy a finer planet, of Asian gardens, pervaded with an ineffable fragrance of soul. This planet did not hold China, full of black blots; it had nothing to do with the terrible Pavilion with leprous beggars leaning out of it. Julie did not know what this land was or where, but it was full of the accumulated and expurgated glories of the East.

However Barry might succeed or fail, if his projects collapsed at his feet or if he won heroically, he alone was wonderful, splendid, inspired; the Excelsior man struggling upward with the banner of humanity. He burned upon Julie's dreams as everything bright and fine. She recalled the night they had first shared their virginal dreams — before the sinister obstacle had come. Why had they been separated to take ever widening roads of destiny? Near him she felt a sense of tingling peace, of vivid harmony with even the un-

conscious stones, so contrasting with all the other gloomy emotions that had warped her life. She could have gone on forever in the atmosphere he created of fluid golden good-will. Where he was, was always light. Even the dusk glowed preternaturally, with a promise hid. A sense of him pervaded the garden now, its lighted lengths, its drifting fragrance. His presence was still here, touching every pulse.

All about were the mates of the garden. She knew their little dramas: the male Papaya Tree peering across in dark discomfiture at a private little miracle — a comb of incandescent mites of blossoms that his mate had proudly on display! The lovely lady Sun-Tree dancing like an houri in the breeze, waving her delicate plumes and swinging her gay bells with their hairs of tongues, while her coarse mate, rooted by his heavy frame to the earth cursed and groaned. Haughty, green women of the garden! They had things better than their human sisters! Above her, pure as the heart of Mary, without ever an earthly love in it, the white cadena trailed snowily along the walls, while orchids quartered on fern trees watched the night with uncanny eyes; and close at Julie's hand the glowing grail of the hybiscus sadly held forth to a darkened world the blood of Christ.

Beautiful sacred garden! If only by some magic it could be carried on to flower forever in all the cycles of her uncertain future! Here in this never-to-be-forgotten garden, they two had sat with the alamanders gleaming upon them like a galaxy of golden moons, and had proclaimed the promise of a new earth.

For once the sense of her weakness, her inconsequence, left her — the burdensome sense of herself as a bungling, unsuccessful instrument of life was swept

out of her consciousness by new visions. The very night shimmered with great dreams. Glowing gates appeared to her imagination, and vast still deserts with men waiting watchfully beneath the stars. It was that watching and waiting that thrilled through her, caused her to start up in wonder and awe, as if from somewhere a summons had throbbed: a vision of far questioning places and of waiting watching men over against the Wall that crowns Cathay.

CHAPTER XX

BUT if there were nights in a moonlight garden, there were also broiling days in an equatorial city with streets hot under foot and an atmosphere like waves of fire. Julie was moving dizzily and heavily through life, sleeping badly, dreaming strangely, and forgetting her food. She sat abstractedly over her meals, staring out beyond her.

"That is the way with you Americans!" Señor Reredo remarked. "You burn yourselves out at once, forgetting that it must be a slow wick and a long one that lasts in the hot winds."

"You are ill!" the Señora would declare. "All the fine little bones in your face are beginning to show."

It was just as well, the girl thought, that the taste for food had left her, since the fare of the Reredos was almost completely unpalatable. Julie supplemented it at great expense in an American restaurant. They sometimes served her *carabao's* milk, and besides, during the meals, it was the habit of Chiquito, the pig, to whimper around the table for titbits, sticking his fore-paws beseechingly on the children's laps. Chiquito was a clean pig and a very clever one, but Julie had her prejudices.

She was forced to walk great distances through the hot streets. Livery *carromatas* were too dear, and she would not get into nondescript Tondo vehicles. Once in desperation she had resolved to attempt one of these conveyances that carried the undercurrent of the city's life. The rat-like remnant of a horse, whose eyes

begged for death, had stopped its unsteady motion, and the coachman, the veriest dust of the streets, was signaling the occupancy of the crazy coach, when a dreadful unconcerned face with small-pox ulcers all over it, and a cigar stuck in the corner of its mouth, thrust itself out at her. Death abroad on a jaunt!

The streets with their unfathomable misery of life were an eternal curiosity to her. It was incomprehensible that men would take the trouble to go on breathing on such terms. Poor, tawdry, human procession, with its occasional holiday of soul, when, like ants from far trails, its units met and rubbed noses unintelligibly. It was good not to be a gopher or an ant, but to be something that counted very acutely in the universe. Gophers were born gophers, ants were born ants — and Julies, by a comfortable decree, were born Julies. It had all been arranged that way definitely and succinctly by thoughtful forces and there was no use of aching over it. Gophers and ants must go on nibbling around the careless feet of the gods. One single human fleck of pity could not fan the East into life. It was all too big a proposition for one ineffectual soul.

One day walking home by a new route, she saw in the aperture of a broken wall, a forlorn old man sitting, looking out with half blind eyes. Poor old hermit, pondering perhaps with all the hopelessness of the East, on To-morrow. She stopped to speak a few words to him, and saw stretching beyond her an alley of broken turns, between lines of battered old walls. Moved to curiosity, she followed the alley and came suddenly upon a savage fastness, at the edge of the sea, a hideous retreat of tattered beggars, who at the sight of the chance invader came leaping up out of the

sand, where they had been ferociously gambling and matching cocks, and closed about her — a jeering, threatening crew, followed by a pack of horrible dogs. Out of their filthy huts made of scraps of tin, boards, old rags, nipa, more tatterdemalion creatures appeared. The dregs of the city cornered here! On the shallows of the sea, lay a flotilla of blood-red sails. What, horribly, did they catch in this nightmare retreat?

Never had she seen human existence in quite so grotesque and satirical a setting. This was not a picture of the usual native, contentedly at sea in the universe, nor of the gophers in their sad mud embankments, nor yet the settled evil of Chinatown, but of a crooked, grimacing sort of corner where the indigestibles of an Eastern city found haven. Human grotesqueries! The ordinary panorama of the native's futile life was disheartening enough, but this blur of savage hobgoblins jeering at the sun, seizing like Macbeth's witches on the prey of the Alley was terrifying. She ran precipitately back, tearing her garments from the women's greedy clutches, with the howls of the Alley in her ears and their blood-red sails burning on her brain. The horror of the East! The Pavilion of unreclaimed human waste for which not even God cared!

Stumbling blindly home in the sun with an aching head, she felt that this hot cosmos into which her life had fallen was a furnace that was going to consume her altogether. But the medicine, she remembered, would help this miasma and dull the sick weight of the world. She climbed upstairs, picked up a box and took a powdery pellet from it.

On the table lay a long, official envelope. She picked it up abstractedly and broke it open, wondering why

the red-haired man was moved to send out so many meaningless, uninspired messages. She glanced it over, then suddenly for an instant not a thing stirred in her. At last her breath broke out of her throat in a sob. Another blow out of the East!

The Department was very brief about what it had to say. It gave no specific reason, nor did it go deeply into explanations. It merely announced that after the end of the current month her services would no longer be required. It took not more than a line to intimate that the failure of her efforts in the Southern Islands was responsible for this decision. If she desired transportation to the States — the Department was beautifully benevolent about this — it would arrange it at an expense to her of one hundred and twenty-five dollars gold.

All such savings as she had made had gone at once to Mrs. Morris. She had no money, so what did transportation to the States or to the moon mean to her? When she had embarked for these Islands she had assumed the complete responsibility of herself. But to be pushed out without a hearing at court — or a cent to depend upon! The red-haired man had bided his time. Miss Hope who was now in Manila had furnished him with the weapons of retaliation for that scene in his office long ago.

The East was trying hard to cast her out — and she had asked only to struggle along and fumble for the end of the rainbow. But never, never, could one be secure here. In the East, one was like a nation trembling always on the verge of war, quivering before a catastrophe that would surely fall. But she would not leave it — till things had happened. She would not be driven out before her time. She was not beaten

yet. She was not beaten yet. She would not beg, nor starve, nor explain. If Nahal had done nothing else, it had stiffened her pride. The Señor had several times spoken of how useful she would be in his office in the morning to attend to the English aspects of his practice. She could have employment from him for the whole day.

If they had not spoken of Nahal, if they had not employed that particularly fatal word *failure* concerning the work of her heart, she might have risen to give them battle. But the Department had touched vitally and cruelly the quick of her soul's pride. Nahal — the single sacred endeavor she had to her account in the New World — had betrayed her finally and openly. Barry, the colossus, stood with his feet on two soils; Shell held in his grasp a savage empire; and Chad, and multitudes of others, struggled to shape the new existence; but she, stripped of her pretensions was blowing like a scarecrow to the winds of the East. Not for worlds would she have had Chad know that his intuitions concerning her, his resentment of her in his universe, had been justified. Nobody should ever know this final humiliation — that she had been weighed in the scales and found wanting.

With that paper on the table her connection with the Builders in the East had snapped like a cobweb to a star. The Great Experiment had thrust her out. Henceforth hers was a separate lot, a mere grubbing for existence. Julie laid her head down on the table and wept inspired youth's disillusioned tears. The fragrance of the golden jessamine floated up across the seas from that far, relinquished kingdom of the soul. A poor, desolate and bewildered spirit mourned outside the gates of its shining memories.

"My island!" The girl wept after its vanishing outline.

But Julie knew that, though she might bid Nahal farewell forever, it would still remain an abiding obstacle of soul — a dark enigma lying heavily across her life.

The Señor was completely satisfied with the new arrangement whereby she gave her whole time to his service. He was the only person with whom she was wholly candid concerning her break with the Educational Department.

Barry, she found hard to satisfy with explanations on this score. She confessed to him that for a long time she had owed a large debt which had ridden her back like a nightmare, that expenses were too high to save anything on her salary and that the Señor's emolument was in excess of anything that she could expect elsewhere. He looked at her hard but said nothing. His silence troubled Julie at night. She knew that he was disturbed that she should have abandoned even her small part of the Cause, which in these days was in urgent need of the whole strength of its adherents.

His own business affairs she knew were disintegrating. People said he had been losing money for some time. But he stuck to what now commenced to appear as a losing cause. Julie thought miserably of the time when he would cease to appear in the character of a prince of the East. He was grappling now with tremendous forces at home and abroad. The agitation for independence for the Islands surmounted for the moment every other national concern. The natives awaited almost hourly its promulgation.

"We're six thousand miles away — in the other half

of the globe, and they can't visualize our problems. They don't understand that they must hold this thing off for a while. The whole course of history will be changed. Oh, if they could have one 'look see' into the Pavilion, Julie! or one glimpse at the holy foundations of the new Asia! I tell you I can't bear to see this project cut adrift in the universe alone. Ah, well, I'll be going to China soon, and I promise you I'll raise every foot of its ancient dust."

Julie adored Barry in his spurts of white wrath, but he was wretched now as well as angry.

"Cleopatra's barge will not stay afloat. It will sink with its Eurasian captains in Eastern seas!" Julie prophesied.

He glanced up quickly. "Isabel!" he muttered. "She must be in a fine frame of mind. Perhaps the grandiose title we gave her may yet come true. Republics over here will be sadly unsteady things. A strong hand can too easily twist them into the one-man power the East understands. It's the effect on China I fear the most. She was drawing life and encouragement from this experiment, and just at the crucial moment the whole thing with its far reaching results, is about to topple into dust!

"The day is near," he told her, "when we must pick up our packs and move on."

Julie tried to realize it, tried to plan toward such an eventuality, but a spiritual as well as a physical inertia enveloped her like a super-added sheath of being. She exerted herself to the utmost to hide this new condition from his observation for she knew in what a desperate struggle he was engaged for the life of the New East. More than any personal emotion that could ever seize him, she believed, this passion gripped

his heart. And for one who had achieved nothing in this issue, who had actually been flung out of all its purposes, no legitimate appeal remained. Her dazed being still responded acutely to all his problems — but the greatest of them all had left an agony in her soul.

Once he looked at her very troubled. "What's the matter, Julie?" he begged.

And Julie seeing that in that moment he had forgotten everything but her, grew frightened in spite of her exultation.

"Oh, it's just the effects of the sunstroke!" she exclaimed, drawing herself defensively up.

"I'll take you to see Braithwaite," he said. But he was summoned away on another of his critical errands and the visit to Dr. Braithwaite did not take place.

Nevertheless Julie was stirred to concern by the abnormal agitations within herself. She scrutinized herself in the glass one day, and was startled by what she saw. The delicate outlines of her face, which looked like sculptured crystal, reflected a disturbing inner ravage. Under her lower lip a singular bluish shadow, which for some time had been dimly suggested, had become definitely marked, as if some menacing malady were revealing its first sign.

She was puzzled and a little alarmed. She resolved to go and see a doctor, only to remember that in her present unstable state she dared not risk the complication of the cost. She consoled herself with the thought that if she were really ill more malevolent symptoms than these would have declared themselves.

Her mind skirted lightly an under-current speculation concerning the medicine she had been taking. Because it had become so indispensable, she did not actually attempt closely to question it. It was unquestion-

ably, peculiarly and irregularly derived; but it certainly was not poison, as her use of it had proved. And it did work; it took pain away;—whatever abnormal after-agitations it might produce—and just now that was what overwhelmingly counted. Back of that fact she was not disposed to go. Rosalie had been perfectly right when she said that a large part of the valuable drugs of the world were to be found wild here. Julie herself had walked through pungent jungles and forests and felt that she was traversing some universal pharmacopœia. The natives of Nahal through the use of herbs, which were the only medicinal aids at their disposal, had learned how to exist quite without doctors. Julie had a consciousness that clung to any sort of panacea. She manifested always an inability to stand upon her own spiritual powers. This particular panacea, she was however aware, had caught upon some vital fiber. On blistering days when the heat hung in the air like a stifling blanket and all the forces of her being refused to go on, the old crone's nostrum dropped a soothing veil over her blinded, quivering senses and freed her awhile from her intolerable burden.

It helped also in another struggle, the struggle to keep from understanding, as the days passed in the Señor's office, why her services were so valuable to a pupil who paid so high a price to make no progress at all. Subconsciously she had sensed for a long time at what this artistically indirect method aimed. As the Señor's vocabulary of gallantry began to come out more clearly from behind its Spanish ambush, the girl sometimes felt as if she were hanging by a hair over a precipice. She cursed devoutly her knowledge of French; for though she pretended not to understand,

the translation would too often come out on her burning face. She dared not be angry; she could not revolt: were not her last bridges cut behind her? Between her and the most desperate extremity, this situation alone interposed. This slow, creeping Spaniard was the rope on which she must balance across the cataract. So when opulent emerald rings and rare rubies were discovered lying casually upon her desk — for her to admire — and were waved back silently upon her when she tried aghast, to return them to their owner, she could only employ the foolish subtlety of remarking how much Señora Sansillo would appreciate these intended gifts of her thoughtful husband.

It was a silly strategy, executed by a crude man in the crudest way. There was no spirit in it; the lovely stones stood for nothing but an ignorant man's misapprehension of the human soul. It would have been laughable to the girl had she been in other than a desperate plight. Nor could she laugh at anything that caused her so to despise herself, her own ignoble clinging to such a rope of life.

But she would not retreat from her individual stand. Barry alas, had troubles enough now. And this place, which had monstrously and unjustly, and without a hearing, cast her out, should receive no appeals from her. One must make a final stand on one's own in this shattering world — and not if she were to die to-morrow would she come out and declare her failure. She was still desperately, so she conceived, the mistress of her own fate.

Then at the climax of these over-head emotions, would come an engulfing ennui, as if all this stir were but an eternal pouring of water through a sieve. To keep alive in this fearful foreign whirlpool, one had to

struggle every instant. Something seemed to be thrusting her gradually toward the edge of a dark and fatal pool, and there was creeping over her an appalling weariness of life.

One day she received word that Isabel wished to see her. She had not seen Isabel for some time. After having been discarded from the real life of this colony and forced to her present anomalous mode of livelihood, she shrank from encounter with the brilliantly successful ones whose rival she had once essayed to be. As the outcast from the Great Project that Chad had predicted she would become, her despair at seeing those who had entered the race when she had, became sometimes more than she could combat. The wretched queerness of her being lately had made her morbidly acute.

Isabel most of all had seemed to press this superior fortune pitilessly upon her, had even, so the girl thought, demonstrated a hint of hatred on their meetings. This thought troubled Julie; but she could not bring herself to ignore the summons, for not only had Isabel's friendship more than once been turned to account, but Isabel sending for her in this unexplained way, showed that she had something vital to say. Out of this infinite restlessness Julie wondered, as she set out for the house of the caliphs, what was to develop.

Everything appeared unchanged. The old keeper, with the withered face like a Chinese nut, who had told her the first time she had seen the place that this was the dwelling of a "daughter of the country," came forth from his lodge and ushered Julie into Isabel's domain. Absolute stillness pervaded the house. The dwarf, who had watched her acutely as he conducted her up the stairs, disappeared. The pensiveness and

inertia of the tropical afternoon had fallen like a sad mood over the exotic world. Julie looked about her and sighed. She felt a desire to get out of this ageless Asian splendor down into the sun of the street. To-day the teak wood called up visions of distant sweating bodies. The shining dark floors stretched like black waters beneath the feet; the heavy golden curtains stirred as under Indian magic; and the ivory Buddhas dozed in a changeless Nirvana. Perfume hung in the air: the smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of ivory palaces, mixed with the odors of dying flowers. Back in the next room, in a corner where she could just glimpse it, was the gilt shrine of the Green God, who from time immemorial had inspired in the hearts of men the fear of fate.

Abruptly at an invisible warning, Julie's eyes swerved sharply. A sinister brown face gleaming like an evil star from a chaotic mass of black hair appeared half concealed among the potted palms. Julie rose almost defensively.

"Isabel!" she exclaimed, with a tremulous voice. She did not wish this changeling, who could assume at will the soul of either of two races, to see how disturbed she was.

The Malay woman bore down upon her in stormy silence.

"I haven't seen you for a long time," Julie said, agitatedly casting about her for a means to meet this mood. "I lead a hard, busy life." She spoke of the difficulty of her existence as if the fact of it might somehow appease Isabel, who drew nearer and fixed upon Julie a gloomy concentration.

There was something almost thirst-like in this examination. Isabel appeared to be straining for some-

thing that lay beyond the girl's own consciousness. The sun had given Julie a glow of color, and when she essayed to smile the old miracle of look transfigured her like a sudden star lighting brightly the weariness of earth. Isabel waved a demolishing hand before it.

"Futile, futile flame! I knew it would burn itself out. You want me to believe," she went on fiercely, "that you are in a deep struggle — that you are giving your soul to be ground up for some fine cause. But you can't deceive me. I know that you are a malingerer — and that, whoever's bones may be broken by the wheels, they will assuredly not be yours. In the vigil, the peril, the anguish of this fool's dream, you have had no part. You have sat and waited — like an imbecile sphinx — for something to come along and solve your foolish riddle. The very stars have sung in your ears, and you have not heard. Nothing has touched you — nothing can!"

In sullen challenge, she swept on. "Why were you not content with your little hillcock, and your wretch of a man-ant? Why have you to stretch out your foolish disastrous hands to pull a world to pieces? You know," she rushed on, fiercely, "that our friend Barry along with the rest of them — stands on the brink of complete catastrophe; that the great structure he believed he had created is about to fall about his head; you know too what the love of these things is to him — yet you thrust yourself between him and a single saving chance; you who could blow away out of the world like a feather, without consequence to any one! It is always exasperatingly weak things like you who plant their feet in the course of fate. I have sent for you to tell you that you had better take yourself out of the way."

Julie stared with a beating heart at this being to whom she was as a kindling to a flame.

"I don't know what you mean by my being in the way," she stammered weakly. Isabel stood somberly glaring at her. What was in this woman's mind? What was it all about? Her eyes turned to escape this dark distorted vision, and ran along the wall's stream with an armory of poisoned weapons, each of which was forged to deal death in a particularly monstrous way.

Her mind struggling with its fears caught at the vague intimation of hope for Barry in Isabel's wild utterances. "Oh, do you mean that he could be saved — out of the wreck? You could do it, Isabel, of course. Oh, don't," she pleaded desperately, "let him be driven out!"

"Do you think you have to plead with me, you little wastrel? The East will requite those who truly give themselves to it. There will be a place in it for Barry — but there will never be any place for you — that is what I want you to understand. When the hour comes to requite him, I warn you not to intervene."

Julie's spirit asserted itself. "What is going to happen to him?" she demanded.

Isabel flung at her a contemptuous glance, and exclaimed in a sudden abandon of revelation: "The finest thing that ever happened to a white man in the East."

The girl's head sank. Upon her memory had flashed the new portentous words exchanged in Barry's house between Isabel and the white Rajah of Ramook. Her whole being felt suddenly borne down. Her lips slowly paled; the light swept out of her face, leaving it a chill, ghastly white.

Isabel strained forward, her eyes riveted on the blue blur which stood out now under the girl's lips. "Ah! —" she said, and sank back, while Julie moved unsteadily to the stairs.

She went through the down-dropping dusk of the garden, in utter hopelessness of mood. The choice of the starry ways cut off forever.

CHAPTER XXI

BARRY hurriedly presented himself one afternoon at the Señor's offices. Father Hull was fatally ill, and Barry had come to get Julie.

Outside the priest's room, in the Military Hospital, they found a hushed motley assemblage — officials of high standing, prominent natives and poor ones, many of those Father Hull had called his camp-fire colony, grouped there waiting for news. A nurse flitted occasionally in and out; in those days of over-crowded hospitals, nurses were forced to disseminate their administrations.

Barry and Julie stepped softly into the room where the priest's emaciated form lay stretched upon a bed. They bent down, and watched tremulously for his fluttering breath. The stern, make-shift surroundings, the absence of any one near to him, brought the tears to Julie's eyes. While she had been giving all her thoughts to herself and her own vicissitudes, the priest had hung on his cross suffering. His outstretched wasted arms seemed to be offering the final oblation of life. He was going out after a hard march. The camp fires were dying, and he who had urged the souls of men along rough trails was being extinguished with them.

His eyes opened feebly and rested on the door. Some yet living sense that stood on guard over his earthly mission must have affected this flickering return. His lips moved urgently. Julie understood

that before he slipped out there was some token his spirit wished to pass to his colonist children. She tiptoed to the door and summoned them in.

As they entered, the priest turned upon them the helpless solicitude of a dying father. He was leaving in their faltering hands their unguarded destinies. The old Judge grasped his inert hand in helpless sadness, murmuring under his breath something about "giving it up for good." The Blackstones, shabby and broken, held up a thin frightened baby before his glazing eyes. Jerome's somber, worn, dissipated face worked with emotion. Mrs. Abernathy wept softly at the foot of the bed.

But it was to the shining serenity of the Ashbys that the priest turned for his last vision of life. He kept his eyes fixed upon them, as if, in this final extremity, they helped.

Julie glanced curiously at Mrs. Ashby, who now stood beside Father Hull holding one of his hands. Her lids, drooped downward, appeared closed. By her blank outer aspect the girl knew that she was withdrawn into some mammoth struggle. It seemed to vibrate about her in excitations of the atmosphere, as if an atom sought to stir all space. "She is trying to save him," Julie thought.

There should of course be a way to do it. Death was a mistake that had crept into creation. That was shown by the fact that never yet in all the eons had man accepted it naturally. Life itself, in its sundering battles, had perhaps evolved this malevolence, which darkened the whole universe. Never had she looked on this irremediable mystery without experiencing an insensate revolt and an unaccountable conviction of its unnecessariness. She looked around

at this circle of wretched human helplessness, at the supreme helplessness on the bed, and felt unreasonably that they had still not turned the last stone.

She turned to Mrs. Ashby to see if she might unaccountably have demonstrated an answer to the struggling things within her mind. But she too had clearly only grazed the great secret — for the priest suddenly was dead. Over the city that he had left forever, the sunset gun boomed.

In a silence that weighed like lead, Julie and Barry rode home. Julie broke it at last. "He should not have gone!" Then to the dusk she murmured absently and fragmentarily: "The things I do — ye shall do also!"

"What are you saying, Julie?"

"One Person solved the mystery, you see."

He stared at her blankly. Then she roused herself. "It's unnecessary — this dying," she broke out.

"In this instance criminal. A filthy disease to conquer so great a human force!" Barry declared with bitter passion. "If death didn't break one's heart, it would make one insane with anger. He had good doctors, too," he reflected gloomily.

"But doctors can only go so far. Then you strike the dark border where unfathomable mystery lies; the door-step of the unknown, where accident, chance, the turn of a hair — and, yes, miracle intervenes. Nobody can penetrate there. If only one could!" She leaned earnestly toward him, the light coming into her face.

"Yes," he meditated gently, "all life hangs on a miracle. Yet," he exclaimed somberly, "I think he is to be envied in passing out before the great débâcle. You couldn't have turned his footsteps from these

shores, and he couldn't have borne to sit among the ashes of such big hopes."

Julie had never seen Barry look so worried, as if a blow had been struck across a vital part of him. Other people were always weary in spots, or altogether; but he had been undaunted in harness, campaigning joyously against the obstacles of the East. Soul-stirring, world-overturning Barry, who had set his tireless shoulder to every load! His heart must not break!

Often lately in their evening drives over a moon-enchanted city, a city with all her sad secrets hid and along the great ocean lying like a sector of eternity against poetically silvered mortal shores, she had seen him strain about and look over it all and sink back with a bitter sigh. She had read all the heaviness that lay in his soul at these times.

"I say, and I will continue to say to my last breath, that we were winning Asia step by step. Over in China, they are beginning to strew the dynamite that will blow the old order of things off the globe. It makes me too angry to speak of it! And I ask you, Julie, if the Gods have given me a square deal? Isabel's Green God will win the day, curse him!"

Julie looked at him searchingly. "Isabel is a great friend of yours, isn't she, Barry?"

"She works against me, and tries to upset everything I do; but she still manages to convey the intimation that she means well toward me."

"But what do you think she finally does mean towards you?"

Barry glanced up wonderingly. "She is an old friend of mine, and does not want, I imagine, the best of her friendships broken. In a way, you can scarcely blame her for seeing things as she does."

"She is beautiful — very!" Julie added, with a trifle of severity toward herself.

"She is justly the Queen of the East."

"Suppose," the girl broke out feverishly, "she should find something splendid to offer you!"

"There is no splendor left to me here, that I can conceive of."

"But if you could still serve in the East — would you do it — at all hazards?"

"I will serve the East till I die," he said between set teeth. "It may revile me, trample on me, repudiate me altogether, but it shall not, I say, utterly cast me out — as this place is about to do."

He looked at her in despair. "The cholera is in the city, Julie. A just judgment on the blind. Lord God of Hosts, after our labor and sweat, the eternal plague! It seems to have broken out in nearly every province; and if it keeps on at this gait, it will rot the Archipelago. It looks like a holocaust this time, to sweep away this blind beggars' caravan.

"The Peste!" he muttered. "You haven't heard that wail of the lost over the devastation of their little lives, as I have, nor walked at sunset through the blood-red light into their poor hamlets and found them dying darkly behind their rush walls, with the fiat of God written on their foreheads, as they'd say. Isn't that the human soul of it — conceiving the curse that its blindness has brought down upon it to be a splendid decree of God? If a thousand years were as a day — as they are to Him — we'd win over here. But look at these creatures now, tearing everything away, and shouting out across the seas that they can stand alone, their bewildered souls on their splendid feet!" Barry relapsed into his native idiom, as he often did when

he was greatly stirred. "And here they are at last in the power of the Plague, with their splendid feet a-fleeing, and their bewildered souls going out to God, who never asked for them in such a hurry.

"That's the soul-splitting East! You may take its highways barefooted, your veins bleeding all over them at every step, you may hand its people from a high mountain the kingdom of God, but they'll never be caring a bit. It's not in the nature of any of them to give thanks to God or man. Sometime far hence, when I'm through with the East and wish to go up into a cloud to rest my soul of it, they may try to persuade me down with a mountain of gold, but I'll kick the whole thing over and go on my way up."

He dropped his fervent fantasies, and fixed upon her a passion of solicitude. "Take care of yourself, Julie, mind! You have a shining bit of light on you that I never saw on another mortal woman — and which will hold me through all the dark places I shall pass through. What does it matter whom else they say you are waiting for! Never, to the end of time, will I believe the soul of you stands waiting for another man! In all these days, when my heart has been going out to you, you've had this will-o'-the-wisp in your brain. It can't be anything more — just a screen down the path, hiding for a little while the light."

"Who," Julie asked, turning white in amazement, "told you that?"

"Chad and Isabel — my friends who do not see your fairy light. They want me to let you pass on — as though I wouldn't go on following after you across all the tracks of the universe!"

Often the portals of her spirit had started to spring — to loosen her imprisoned emotion, but the con-

viction of her unworthiness, the fear of mischievously or malignantly encroaching upon his life, had dammed it back. Sometimes even in her despair, she had felt that his eyes were looking for something the confines of her gates did not contain. Now, almost overpoweringly the impulse to disregard the consequences, to fling open her soul, to disemburden it to the bottom on that instant of all the pain that had habitation there, flared up in Julie. The very citadel of her soul had been struck.

Then sweeping over her again came all that Isabel had said — the terrible, almost inconceivably terrible calamities she had threatened. Once more she remembered the prophetic flash of look between Isabel and the Rajah of Ramook — the *king* of Ramook! after independence Barry was to have a high place — the highest they had to give, perhaps. She swept out her hands distressfully, as if to clear away this mammoth bewilderment. Suddenly she found resolve, even with the suppressed tears choking her.

"Chad and Isabel are right!" she declared huskily. "I am not fit to come in your path — not at all worthy of ideals and energies like yours. Chad said I was a wastrel — and so did she. The woman who should touch your life, Chad said, should be one of concentrated fine forces. I have never concentrated anything. I have moments of inspiration, moods of fervor, but never have they — never perhaps will they knit into anything abiding. I tried in Nahal. I gave it the best in the compass of my being. If anything was to be fulfilled, it would have been fulfilled there. Nahal was my Chance. I can't think why it turned out as it did — I wonder if I shall ever know. My catastrophes there have made me stagnant. You see, every-

thing mattered so terribly then. I was red-hot iron to be struck to any shape of the future. I couldn't make you understand — not even by opening up a whole train of luckless experiences and abasing myself in the telling of them. Sometime, perhaps, a reckoning will come.

"Why did I have to go South — after we had met that night on the roof! That is when our spirits really met. But something took me on and on in another direction. Perhaps I wouldn't have been — *I* — the sum of me — without all that has come to pass. I don't know what the answer is going to be. I won't be a marsh light to you, luring you along false paths — but I can't bear, Barry, dear" — her voice broke — "to have you desert me altogether. Go on holding me in your thoughts!" she entreated with a little sob.

The sight of his bowed shoulders and hopeless face overwhelmed her. Atlas crushed under his load, struggling tragically against destruction.

"I'll do anything to save you, Barry!" she cried, clinging wildly to him. "You mustn't drop down. Something is going to happen to you. Some one is going to help you out!"

After he had left her at the Reredos' gate, the universe seemed to have widened fatefully between them, leaving her alone — all alone, in fearsome areas of space. She crept up the stairs to her room. But not even the medicine brought her any sleep that night; never had her being been so hideously disturbed. Isabel had promised mysteriously tremendous things, for the fruition of which she had been ordered out of the way. Everybody was ordering her out of the way. Out of the vague plots that seemed everywhere

about her, but one thing emerged, but one thing counted — the possibility of a turn in Barry's fortune.

If the Islands should now become independent before they were prepared, almost anything might come to pass. There was a leaven in men's thoughts, Barry had said, that was bound to turn things frightfully about. Humanity was urging on to the pass where it would accept the most portentous challenges of fate: the old structure of its existence, handed down through the ages, would no longer answer for the framework of men's lives. Dissatisfied with the ancient edifice, it would overthrow the world, and rear a new. "A new heaven and a new earth, my dear, for these blind human bats is on the way," Barry was wont to declare. Barry's enthusiastic fancy was fired by this magnificent mood, which he claimed to discern all over the earth. There would be an explosion, of course, to blow away a lot of mediæval rot — and there would be loss of life: to get the message of the stars, one had to bleed. They could have his life — oh, yes, a dozen of them. He had flung away a dozen impossible lives with an indifferent Olympian wave.

Which all went to prove to Julie's mind that Isabel's speculations might not prove so startling, after all. Well, if through the instrument of Isabel's uncertain hands, his dream could be saved, nobody at all must stand in the way — certainly not a mere Julie with her knotted web of life. But how was one to make sure of the vivid, veiled Isabel?

At dawn, Julie rose, and dressed feverishly. She summoned a *carromata*, and set out in an agitation of anxieties for Santa Ana. Mrs. Ashby had told her to seek her out when she was in trouble. Everybody

was in trouble now; not one in these stressful times knew where to turn; Julie herself, least of all. Mrs. Ashby had managed to convey to her the intimation of a certain exceptional strength, which she now felt a desire to draw upon for extrication from her difficulties.

The Ashbys inhabited — that being a term for the state of life which they shared under the same roof with a community of other people — a large Spanish house not far from the river. The surrounding fields, enriched by the stream, looked in the distance like the work of an impressionistic artist rather than of an orderly nature. The house stood alone, sunk in the lush depths of the rice fields, where workers picturesque clad in red in a seemingly jocose attempt to terrorize the birds, were cutting the young rice to the music of a rough guitar plied by a recumbent artist under a huge umbrella. The house itself, painted green, jutted out of the surroundings, of a piece with them.

The institution was called the Free School of Practical Arts — the words “free” and “arts” making a direct appeal to the native, whose graceful inclination of mind construes freedom as leisure, and Art as a casual expression of leisure.

The principal instruction was concerned with the habits of civilized living and thinking. The male aspirants were taught to design furniture and join it, to care properly for the universally abused domestic animals, to farm, to tailor their own garments, to construct simple *nipa* houses, and to practice sanitation. The girls and women were taught to manipulate the native stove to better and more varied methods of cooking, to do sewing, and to make fine embroidery — from

which industry, as well as from the bureau of domestic employment in connection with which house servants were trained, was derived some revenue. The care and feeding of infants, whose mortality in these parts was startling, had also an important place in their instruction.

As Julie entered, she was struck by the happy and trustful atmosphere of the place. Mr. Ashby's spectacled eyes lifted to her from the planing of some boards. A flock of keen, merry-eyed boys, let loose from concentration, burst argumentatively into English about the work in hand. Just at the present moment back in the city, her own former pupils, Julie well knew, were attempting to explain to Clarino — who had sat up till midnight to discover it — the difference between the reflexive and the passive verb forms.

Mr. Ashby led her on till they discovered Mrs. Ashby engaged, with that air of glowing serenity, which had at the first caught Julie's eyes, in her own peculiar bright activities.

Mrs. Ashby looked at her soberly. Something in the girl's appearance held her thoughtful attention.

"I have come to see you — as you asked me to do," Julie told her.

She led the girl to a sunny sala overlooking the tinkling fields. Julie, as she followed, was thinking that since Father Hull had found in this woman a strength to die by, she might, in these evil times, disclose a strength for living. She had pulled herself out of very dark places. People who could so marvelously help themselves must possess force for other lives.

As they sat down, Julie exclaimed: "You see, I

am unhappy! And I have a notion that I may be ill. Last night I scarcely slept at all. Something in me is wrong, and certainly everything outside of me is. Things are so black! Oh! What is to happen to all these people who have worked, and hoped? I have worked and hoped too, but it hasn't counted — nothing counts; I am very nearly sure of that. I've lost my position — though I haven't told anybody that I was thrown out — because of Nahal. It was a cut to the heart," she brooded. "Then — I am working for an odious man.

"And Barry," she went on restlessly. "What is to happen to him? I've never seen him down before. It frightens me. Are we all going down under some avalanche? Some of us have no place else to go. I don't understand — but that's my eternal, foolish cry. I've blistered my soul praying about everything. I thought you would understand. Oh! You must, for I have come to you for light. You are not blind, you are not floundering; you are safe and sure. What is it that makes your life so strong?"

"Tell me," Mrs. Ashby said, bending toward her, "what you prayed for."

"For Barry's safety through the world!" Julie replied simply.

"And for nothing else?"

Julie started a trifle. "Well, for a number of things — at different times."

Mrs. Ashby reflected a moment. "I used to pray when our money was getting short that more would come so that we might buy a fresh bottle."

Julie gave a shiver of repugnance.

"We were both, weren't we, praying at cross-purposes?"

Julie frowned slightly. "What I want to know is why I am rolling always to disaster; why I can't call a halt — why I can't see clearly?"

"Do you know how hopeless I was — Dick and I, drowning together, in this oriental maelstrom? We expected to finish in one of the hells of the East. We knew that time was fast overtaking us. And there would come to me, when I awoke sober in the night with the whole universe clutching at my throat, the terror of those black pits.

"Many people tried to help us. I recall their futile efforts wafting across our heedless lives. Then there came across our path the Little Gray Woman, as we call her. I don't know what she was doing away over here. She said she was just a joyous old traveler of the world. She was not actually different from anyone else, you must understand, but she found us blind things in her path calling out from the highways for sight. It would be difficult to make you understand just how she came to help us break the bondage of our flesh."

Mrs. Ashby paused thoughtfully, then went on. "You remember how, in divine contempt, He picked up clay and, mixing it with spittle, laid the bandage of the earth across the eyes of those who all their lives had understood in terms of clay — and tearing it away, revealed to them the miracle of sight. So it came to us. We were summoned, poor Lazaruses, from our tombs, into the day."

Mrs. Ashby lowered her head. "This is a strange language to you, and these are not revelations for a laughing world, but for those who are going out in darkness — for men stricken in agony on the battlefield, for all who like you are in the throes of terror

and destruction. These truths are the springs outside your reach across the thirsty desert.

"When you come at last upon the light, the grave-clothes the mind has worn so long drop away; the false garment man has spread across the face of things dissolves, and you find that you are not in the world for a day, but that you are in the *universe* forever.

"Oh! If you only knew it, you could walk free through the earth, fearing nothing. When I found that I was not thonged by crucified feet to an inexorable world, that the world was only a snowdrop on the face of the eternal, a mood of the universe; and that I was greater than all of it, could shape it with my will, touch the widest reaches with my thought — that of all creation, God and my kind alone could *will* — then the light of Paul broke!

"The light of Paul, Julie! A golden light, beating on the soul, revealing its far country, the kingdoms of the unseen whose invisible marvels can be brought to our own threshold.

"It was in the knowledge that it was not death he was facing, but a new direction in God's areas, that Father Hull passed out."

"Why did he die?" the girl asked abruptly. "I felt queerly to blame for being so weak that I couldn't do anything. Doctors have told me that they have had the same feeling, even when they have exerted themselves to the utmost."

"Ah! There you are touching upon the kingdoms of the unseen. All their powers can be brought to our threshold," she repeated, "as Franklin brought the lightning out of the blank sky. We don't know half the forces that move through the universe. Another generation will understand. We are but poor

jugglers tossing glass balls, when we might be moving stars."

"But — you tried," the girl stammered.

Mrs. Ashby cast upon her a new look. "You saw that!" She brooded in silence for some time. At last she said: "We are in mystery still. It will take a long time. He did not understand, nor did I — enough. You have to be very strong for that!"

The girl rose. "Alas! I am used to things as they seem. I see the shapes and the obstacles of the world very plainly. I am traveling a longer road than to Damascus, and I don't see the light. But I shall always remember what you have said to-day.

"I can only grasp at the tail of your ideas; but that one thought — that I am not of the world, but of the universe — that is sweet and splendid. It carries me on wings into regions I've never dreamed about. To be timeless, spaceless, to wear a garment of the Indestructible, and to share its miracles!

"I was sick of the pettiness of this little earth, and hideously afraid of the universe; afraid of its sinister unexpectedness, its soullessness towards the microcosm Me, and its imminent threat to break me so that I never could be put together again. You have made it all seem different — and wonderful. Just as if I had found that there were fairies again in the world, and that I was one of them, instead of a trampled little atom not worth bothering about."

Julie went away shining in the new mood; but as she moved back into the material, exotic world, she felt her glorious immunity wearing away, and herself forced to battle to keep her conviction against the old calamitous universe with its desperately insoluble problems.

CHAPTER XXII

ON her way home Julie happened to pass her former school. The old crone to whom she still came for medicine was standing outside the stall. The girl stopped to speak to her.

The old creature passed her brown bones of fingers over her uncanny face and, staring into the face of the sun, began to mutter strangely again about the search for the Ark. A fantastic being, the girl thought, trudging over the earth after a chimera.

Julie told her that the medicine drove the pain away, but that, because of the heat, perhaps, she could not eat or sleep well, and that there came to her the strangest dreams in the world. In them the earth became transparent — she could see clearly through it. She could see people grow, bit by bit, under her eyes; and the forest, by some deep instinct, knew her, and the flowers laughed and cried like children.

The old woman said that all this was true; that in the old days when she lived in the splendors of the world the jungle used to be very hostile to her and would tear at her with its teeth and sprinkle her with its poisons and set its reptiles against her; but now that she had made friends with it she could go through the heart of it and never be hurt. She described how she plucked her herbs, male and female in equal proportion, out of jungles where no man's foot had touched, when the benign forces of the air preponderated over the malign.

Julie said that the body was a stupid abiding place

after these dreams, which put upon her soul marvelous new moods, like a moon forever at the full.

The old woman clutched at the wheel of the *carromata* and stared at her with unfathomable eyes. "Why did you not come with me when I asked you?" she entreated. "You and I could have freed ourselves from the wickedness of the earth, which is a heavy black bundle tied to the back of mortals. We would have searched for the lost Covenant between God and Man."

For an instant a weird vision rose before the girl of the places those footsteps would lead to, down dirty by-ways of the East, catching one's food where one could, brushing skirts with lepers and thieves, in hazes of furnace heat. Thank heaven, not all the incarnations of the East could bring her to a thing like that! And yet for an instant the preposterous invitation had sent an odd thrill through her. This nondescript old woman had touched her soul.

She smiled sadly, and shook her head, and the witch, dropping back from the wheel, moved away, muttering, "Adios!"

And that was the last of her that Julie ever saw.

A few days later, she returned this way from the Señor's, to obtain a fresh supply of medicine. Only one pellet lay in the box at home. But from the shack opposite the school, the old woman had disappeared, without leaving a sign behind her. Because of the manner of her going, the Stall-keeper was positive that she would never come back.

In frightened dismay, Julie inquired of Mariana and Clarino, both of whom had secretly bought amulets of the old woman — Mariana, to enable herself to withstand the attraction of an unusually eligible lover; and

Clarino, to become the principal of a school, to which honor he fearfully aspired. But neither knew anything about her: she was a wandering witch, no doubt, who had perhaps gone away on a broomstick into the sky.

It was through Delphine she received the only light she ever had on the old woman's going. Disturbed over her disappearance from school, Delphine had sought her out at her quarters. She explained to him that she had been ill, and mentioned that she had not been able to procure any more of a medicine which had brought her great relief, and which she had been in the habit of buying from an old charm-woman near the school, who had mysteriously disappeared.

"Dicky-Dicky sent her away!" Delphine exclaimed excitedly. "I saw him come out suddenly upon her, a few squares from the school, and tell her over and over to go away — that danger threatened several people if she were seen around any more."

What did the dwarf mean? Delphine did not know, he did not ask Dicky-Dicky questions because he got severely slapped on the head for such efforts.

Gone, taking her secret off with her! That was the way with these people — always under your feet, until some day, at some mysterious signal, they took themselves finally off! Julie thought with terror of all that lay ahead of her, to face unrelieved — the relentless hot season, her perilous hold on a disorganizing community, her bad health. With the aid of the medicine, she had managed to endure and to go unsteadily on, but the thought of trying to continue without it caused her limbs to grow cold. There was not fire nor force enough in her to fight the rest of the way. To her other trials it was impossible to add ceaseless and gril-

ling pain. In a few weeks she might have to go out of this country — and the passage money was nowhere in sight. Something might yet happen to turn her fate. Until then she must find a way to get the medicine.

Old Kantz, the chemist on Calle Alean, had been in the East for forty years. He would be bound to know what the medicine was and to be able perhaps to get more of it. Julie preferred him to Señor Reredo whose shop was not far distant. So when Señor Sansillo went to Los Baños on business she seized the half holiday to go and see Kantz.

As she entered the Botica a native clerk slumbrously uprose behind the counter. It was a hot day. Nobody was about in it but tired, driven Americans who take account of neither day nor night. Julie made clear to him, however, that she must see Kantz at once.

The old chemist was finishing his siesta upstairs, but as he was accustomed to act as an emergency doctor to his neighborhood he came down, clad in white trousers and an undershirt that covered his fat person like his skin. This attire was not really unconventional in a land where attire might follow almost any persuasion of the mind.

He adjusted his huge lenses and nodded professionally to the girl. Julie, wondering at her own precipitancy and unable to set forth any explanation of it to Kantz, began in an uncertain voice. "I have a medicine here — that I have been taking for some time — for very bad head-aches. I can't get any more of it and I want to see if you can."

"What is it then?" He poked the pellet with a fat finger.

"I — don't know!" she stammered uneasily. It

seemed so foolish a reply to make in the face of this array of bottles confronting her like so many incontrovertible facts and to Kantz who looked like the biggest bottle and the most absolute fact of all.

"Where did you get it?"

Unable to escape, Julie replied in a lowered voice, "It was given me by — a — a herb woman who had helped people I know — of. She has gone away. I can't find her. I need the medicine" — with rising spirit and an attempt at dignity — "it's a native specific."

"Wait, I will try and analyze it." He turned into his tiny laboratory, the pellet, the last one, stuck perilously on his moist thumb.

Julie sat down and studied respectfully the irrefutable bottles. The clerk mixed himself a surreptitious drink behind the counter, and fell into gentle extinction.

Finally Kantz's great shape moved in, and Julie, glancing up, found him looking at her very hard — a stare which even before he opened his mouth, threw every cell in her into turmoil.

"Ach! I have lived in the East for forty years, and do you think I do not know all the tricks of your kind?"

The girl tried to be sure that she was not confronting a maniac — but he was so monstrously calm. "What do you mean?" she quavered in fright.

"That you will not get any more of that medicine, here or in any other drug store unless the keeper wishes to go to Bilibid."¹

He employed a threatening, familiar tone. Once she had heard a man speak to a drunkard like that.

¹ Bilibid — Native prison.

"What is the stuff?" she cried wildly. "Is it poison? Tell me at once."

He turned to his bottles. "These dope fiends!" he muttered exasperated, to them.

"Dope fiends!" the girl repeated stupidly. "A drug! Oh, don't tell me," she cried agonizedly, "— it's —"

"Since the new laws, you will find opium impossible to get. So I tell them all — and they go crazy!"

Julie stared with wildly dilated eyes, her bloodless lips parted as if to protest. Then she fell against the counter. There was a dead hush in the deserted place. Not even a fly buzzed through the scorching silence. Julie tried to lift her paralyzed arms to ward something off. She was dreaming. She had taken too much medicine. Things like this didn't happen!

But there, blistering her, was the chemist's cynical gaze. Day by day she had been moving towards this wall — a blind dupe. She had had a sunstroke on Adams's grave, and an old woman had offered her some medicine for it, and out of this simple sequence destruction had appeared. The avalanche of final ruin swept over the girl's fevered mind. She had been dragged down — clear down. The slow but inevitable juggernaut of the East had pulled her under at last, "grist for the mill — you and I," Adams had said long ago. Out of a clear sky had fallen this final, cruel joke.

"What am I to do?" The piteous question seemed to fall on rather than be directed to the chemist.

"Why then did you begin?"

She repeated her story lamely, disjointedly and in tears, conscious of its futility — Kantz was so fatally incredulous.

"After a time," he told the bottles, "they cannot tell the truth."

The girl looked at him with terrible despair.

"You do not believe me — nobody will believe me. Oh!" she caught at her throat and stared at him with the eyes of a caged animal. She clutched at his arms in frantic pleading. "You are as good as a doctor. Give me something that will cure me. I would offer you a lot of money, but I haven't any. I *will* not go on always wanting that horrible stuff!"

"It is a long hunger. Sometimes it lasts as long as life."

"I didn't mean to get into it — that must count. Help me! I am afraid. You must believe me — I am not a liar! There is a cure for everything — everything," she cried wildly. "Mrs. Ashby said so — Oh!"

Her head dropped on the counter and she wept uncontrollably.

The chemist stared down at her uncomfortably. "Just stop!" he said. "There is no other way."

Julie lifted herself up with a dizzy lurch and plunged out of the botica. A strange being in her form walked the streets, which had become a phantasmagoria of horror. Black shapes of doom seemed haunting the avenues of life — she, the blackest shape of all, groping through under-hells for light. She belonged now to the East forever and forever. It had set its stamp of hopelessness upon her. She moved along staring with desperation and repugnance at this dark race with whose fate she had become allied.

She walked without direction, on and on, not knowing where she was going, goaded by an immeasurable despair. She wandered half way across the city, hat-

less, the sun scorching her head; what goal could there ever be again? All their lives even the few cured struggled, Kantz had said. A cursed pilgrimage the world, to these Wandering Jews of souls! And she wasn't made for struggle. For a fearful fight like this in which she had only one small, slim chance — she knew in her soul she had not the force. She might struggle a little while, but it was not in her being to combat to the end. It was easier to die — but one didn't die, that was the worst.

She stood still on a street corner staring blankly about her. There was no use in going on. There was nothing ahead ever, however far she went. She stood there dully and thought of one thing, the flaky thing that had hung to Kantz's careless finger. Only *that* would lift a little while this madness of sun, and pain and strangling despair. As she gazed tormentedly about her, her mind suddenly made clear the significance of her surroundings. All this wandering had been a subconscious hunt upon which some dim urgent sense had been leading her — to the one spot where there was a chance of getting what she desired. Chinamen always had it.

The girl paused horror-struck. But against the visions she desperately set up, visions of her youth's high quest, of a splendid new Empire of Mankind — of a Prince of the East, a throbbing insistence that had never been denied arose and claimed every atom of her being and wiped out every thought. Dim, distant visions they were now. Not one of them could help — or save her. The Hunger consumed every fiber.

Yet the anguish, the urge of her memories assailed her all the while — visions that had stirred her spirit

terribly accused; voices, very dear voices pleaded with her wretched soul.

Once that lane had been for her the vilest channel in which she had seen life move. Now her torment swept her onward into its currents. She must get a little — secretly — ever so little, to help her through the woods.

She moved like a sleep-walker, a glazed look on her haunted face, among the little stalls, muttering what she wanted under her breath. Nobody must see her on such an errand in such an unspeakable place. The yellow half-shaven heads leered at her like grinning skulls, and pretended not to know what she wanted. They were uncannily wily, exercising their super-evil intuitions. The laws were very strict. They must make sure of her.

She feared them terribly. The old shadow, like the hangman's cap, pressed down over her mind as it had done before. She knew what a welter of evil desires her youthful body evoked up and down the street — but she had forgotten her body, everything but this goading of the furies.

She pursued her way among the stalls. *It* was here and they should not outwit her. The yellowed skulls thrust themselves upon her, their fishy eyes intimating all the wickedness in the world. At one shop the Chinaman appeared to understand. She had put a paper bill upon the counter. He lifted the board that barricaded him behind the counter, and beckoned her to follow. The rear of the shop was black and musty. The Chinaman opened a trap door, and ducked down under the ground. He emerged in a moment with a small package which he held out to her. Julie started forward to get it. The creature's arm swung out

and clutched her. She screamed, but one of the yellow paws dropped over her mouth. Her whole life seemed to go out of her in a final wave of fright. She knew what would happen to her down in that black cavern.

She wrestled against him. He put his hand upon her throat. She could feel to her spine the chill of those yellow fingers compressing her throbbing breath. As she fought away from him, the jade medallion jerked out of her dress. She could feel it on her bosom dancing about wildly. The hold on her throat relaxed. The creature had caught at the amulet with one hand. The girl took wild advantage of his distraction to wrench herself out of his grasp. Diving under the counter she hurled herself into the open street. Nobody was following her, but she fled, with a sobbing cry, through the dust down the center of the street, the denizens of the stalls thrusting out their heads like cobras to stare after her.

She continued to run even after she had gotten into safe districts, on and on like a mad thing. Natives stopped to stare at the white woman run amuck. In her tumult of brain she saw but one vision. Down under the floor of this city, where its black beating heart lay filled with the monstrous passions of men, where a motley evil crew from all the coasts of the East trafficked in human life and flesh, down there she was fated to sink. She had seen her end written on every one of those opium-devastated skulls. Even now she would have been hurled to a rung below hell if the Chinese charm had not diverted her assailant. She had not been saved by her own will nor yet even by an oriental fetish, but by the emblem of one man's love. She remembered the things she had swept aside to go into that horrible street. Nothing had

weighed in the madness of the moment — a moment of hideous impulse that had twisted in devastation every fiber of her being and left it a wrecked thing whose roots a tornado had splintered.

"They that go down to dust!" ran in her fevered brain.

She hurried along, her body shivering, though it was a hot day. Suddenly she saw she was nearing her objective, and stopped to run her feverish, trembling fingers through her pale hair. As she stood in front of Señor Reredo's drug store her heart beat so loudly she feared that he might suspect what was in it.

The Botica, after the native fashion, was broadly open. No barrier must interpose between the native and his passion for the street. The Señor, his slim legs, terminated by red slippered feet, curled around the rungs of a high chair, was reading *El Progreso*, a native organ. He rose when he saw Julie and asked how he could serve her.

She wanted some more of that lotion for tan that he had put up for her. It was more efficacious than anything else she had ever used. She complimented him upon his ability as a chemist; if he should go into business in Spain that ability would be recognized. The Señor, gratified, admitted that here among the "Indianos" was no sphere for a man's brains. They expanded into a discussion of different panaceas. Julie suddenly put her package down on the counter and soberly regarded him.

"Señor, my friend Barry says that an epidemic of cholera is breaking out in this city. He says it is spreading like wildfire and that it will be the worst plague, perhaps, that the Islands have known."

"The plague we have with us always," the Señor replied. "The Americans take it too seriously."

"It rages in the provinces and it has come heavily to many districts here. Barry is greatly worried. He warned me vehemently — and I am afraid. The water, the food, every mouthful, every swallow means danger. More than anything conceivable I fear the Peste. One suffers horribly and cannot die at once. If one could carry always with one something to bring death quickly! I had a friend once who traveled much on railroads where one is in danger of terrible accidents. Once he was buried under the wreckage of a coach and there came an awful time to him, when he feared they would not get him out. After that he carried tied around his neck always a little sack — three grains of morphine — and he was insured. If you would give me the means — to go — quickly in case I were hopelessly stricken, I would not fear any more."

The Señor stared disquietedly at the counter. "Perhaps, I should have left sooner, I have many children!"

"A teacher who came over on the boat with me has just died of it!" Julie shivered.

"I will tell Sofia!" he muttered, "that it is just as well to go at once. Señor Barry knows."

"But I must stay, Señor," the girl pleaded, "in this terror I have no place to go."

He meditated. "Well, if it makes you feel safe!" He turned to his drawers. "Three grains! Yes," he reflected, "that should be right."

The girl picked up the little box nervously. "Thank you, Señor," she said.

CHAPTER XXIII

JULIE walked back into her room, and stared heavily about this shell of her old existence where day by day the rope had been tightening inexorably around her throat. The room looked like a place she had never seen.

On the bed, suggesting her own spent mortal frame stretched helplessly prostrate, lay a worn evening gown. It brought the room back to familiar proportions. The recollection swept over her that to-night Isabel was going to have a party, and that she had put the dress there this morning — a time which seemed now to have no connection with her existence — to determine whether it could be made to hold together for this one night. Isabel had sent her a note, begging her to forget their last meeting and to come to the party. Nothing, of course, could change that explosion of hatred. Yet this morning she had decided to go.

She stared out at her Asian garden. She seemed to see a quick-stepping figure moving down there among the sighing trees. She turned away wretchedly. That was over forever. Soon, when the Reredos went away, the forsaken garden would revert to the jungle. Nobody would remember it. Yes, her soul would find a way to come to this spot of beauty, where the most splendid visions of her life had been evoked.

She began to gather up her belongings. They made just one trunkful,—everything that, after nearly

twenty-one years of sojourn on the planet, she owned. She wondered if there were not something very wrong with a person who could not accumulate more than that after such a long time. The Señor had advanced her a week's salary, which must be returned. She counted the money out of her purse, and laid it on the table. Then she fumbled in her trunk for her letters. The first one she came upon was the notification of dismissal from the Department. The next, Adams's letter, still crying forth its bitter loneliness.

Then she sat down and wrote a letter to her uncle; and here at last her dulled heart was able to bleed. She had tried very, very hard, she told him. She was terribly sorry that things had turned out as they had. But the East was like the Bank of Monte Carlo — with the odds always against you. Of that final catastrophe that had come to wipe out her last chance, she found it impossible to speak. To his Western consciousness away off there, on the other side of the world, in a secure and ordered scheme of life, such monstrous happenings would be inconceivable. A pitiful, incoherent document, that accounted for nothing really, splashed all over with Julie's tears.

She aroused herself feverishly, and examined the dress. The anger of that last meeting with Isabel stood out forcibly before her mind. Isabel hated her because of Barry. And Isabel did not hate fruitlessly. All her emotions found vital expression.

Something kept welling up from the depths of the girl's sub-consciousness — something that was like a wavering clew. Quite without reason, a face rose before her vision — a face looking up stealthily above Isabel's staircase. It turned, and revealed — the face of the old medicine crone! Not till this moment had

memory welded these two associations. The old crone had some identification with Isabel. In her bent shadowy shape, Isabel's hatred took form. Isabel had wanted terribly to get her out of the way. She had not dared to kill her, but she had selected a method of elimination too subtle for its agency to be traced. And Dicky-Dicky, the Dwarf, who had had a place in his heart that was called Nahal, had known, and because of it had frightened the Old Woman away, and attempted to save her — too late. Yes, it was clear enough now.

Chad and Rosalie had been her accomplices, no doubt. But though Chad had been hostile, he had been openly so. Julie was reluctant to accuse him of any complicity in so Oriental a plot as that Isabel had woven. But against the whole white race, Rosalie would have lent herself as an instrument of destruction. Julie could see how Isabel would work upon the fury of her jealousy, set up before it everything American that Rosalie might believe was responsible for the abstraction of her husband's love.

Soon, they had planned, she would be nothing at all but a bundle of flesh, with an appetite — a thing that no human passions could ever reclaim. And when she was wiped out — the shame and horror of her — Barry would be elevated to the place that Isabel was preparing for him. Julie remembered the talk of a paradise. She began to cry again.

She had not seen Barry — for an eternity! She must see him — if only to attempt to make clear to him the things that were in her soul. In the urgency of this desire, everything else was swallowed up. After all there was nothing more that Isabel could do to her. She would go to the party.

While dressing, she studied herself in the glass. An image rose before her — the image of herself that had confronted her on that distant, transported day on the other side of the world, the day she had stepped into life and had offered herself with such magnificence to its designs. Who was to blame? If the Nahalites had had the grace of God — if Isabel — the East — had not hunted her down!

As she was about to leave the room, she turned back, and laid on the table an envelope with some money in it, addressed to Señora Reredo. She picked up her uncle's letter to mail, and the money for Señor Sansillo, glanced agitatedly around the room for an instant, and hurried out of the house.

Señor Sansillo was upstairs when she reached his house, but he came down immediately when he heard who it was that wished to see him. Julie, pale and tense, stood waiting for him in the doorway of his office.

"I've come to tell you that I shall not be here any more!" she said.

He gave a start. "But why?" he asked.

"Because," the girl flung out, "I am weary of earning my living listening to questionable stories, and having horrible jewelry thrust on me. Here is the money you advanced. Thank you!" She held a roll of bills out to him.

An angry flush swept over his face. "You are suddenly independent, Señorita Dreschell?" he satirically exclaimed.

"Yes, my independence came suddenly to me!" she agreed, "therefore I shall never come again."

He darkened volcanically. "You must not — do that!" he commanded, in a shaken voice.

He did not attempt to speak again for a moment, but broodingly studied her face as if to find the key to his new behavior. He must have come to realize the unalterable nature of this new purpose, for he said in tones so strangely humble the girl could scarcely recognize them as utterance of his: "If I promise that I will do these things no more, will you stay?"

She shook her head.

"I beg of you to remain!" he insisted in a low voice. "I will ask only that you sit at that window where you have always sat — only that, no more."

She was startled to perceive that tears of emotion had gathered in his eyes. Suddenly he burst into a torrent of speech, as he paced agitatedly to and fro.

"Do you think then that I have had so much in life?" he demanded turning round fiercely upon her. "Know then that I have been thwarted in all that I ever desired! Fifteen years ago I came to these colonies, penniless, alone. My family had lost everything in Spain. Like many another Spanish youth, I set out with hopes that towered to the skies, for I was young and full of hope. El Dorado would bring me my fortune, I believed, just as you believed it would bring you yours.

"But I found myself a stranger without affiliations in a strange land. My illustrious name counted for nothing in such a country. I was a lawyer, but there were plenty more of my kind who were woven into the network of the Blood, you understand. Shall I tell you how I starved in this land, how my heart ached to breaking because of it! One way of salvation opened to me, the way of most of my desperate countrymen. It was a dark way to me, but it opened the

closed gates of the East. I, too, entered this free-masonry of blood. It was smooth traveling after that, but"—he tore ferociously at his immaculate waist-coat—"if the years could be swung back, and I could walk these streets destitute—but free and a youth again—yes, for that I would toss Satan my soul!"

He put his hand up to his throat. "You came! I used to dream of one like you on that old ship, I, a poor lad on the way to the East to find my fortune: I have tried everything with you, I admit. I was a devil, as you say—but am I not bound in a web whose threads are as strong as the tentacles of the devil fish? This place will turn black as hell after you are gone!"

He paused with hands appealingly outstretched. Another darkened soul! A feeling of pity swept over the girl. She turned upon him a commiserative face.

"I am sorry for you. I am sorry for all of us who sought fortune in the East. We are a pitiable lot, Señor. Drive around the Escolta any night, and you will see us in our several unhappy stages of decay. Some of us were not big enough for our task. Oh, I, too, would have given anything to have succeeded!"

"But what is to become of you?" he cried, in genuine solicitude. "You are ill. You have no money and without money one cannot live one instant in this terrible land. Reverse your mad decision, and stay here. You shall have nothing to fear from me."

Julie shook her head speechlessly. She and her concerns had sunk into a whirlpool of despair, but there remained the one passionate satisfaction of being able to sweep her soul clean at last. So much,

much money that she had not earned — the thought of it burned like fire. She put out her hand. "Good-by, Señor!"

Isabel's house twinkled from a distance with fiery lights. The strains of the orchestra playing, like a band, loud chords of revel, tore open the peace of the night. Julie ascended into an atmosphere in which the note of triumph seemed everywhere proclaimed. Isabel had decorated the place amazingly with palms and tropical flowers. Dark faces flowed about in currents of festivity, wearing, Julie thought, an appalling aspect of victory. Isabel conveyed this impression preëminently. She appeared to be in the throes of some delirious celebration of soul. It was as if there blazed forth from her personality the triumph of many cities and multitudes of islands made glad. She terrified Julie.

All this exultation fell like the weight of doom on the girl's aching spirit. She herself seemed to represent the living defeat of her countrymen. Few of them were here to-night. Their absence made a haunting void in the throng. The charge had gone out of them, the force: almost as if something had taken God out of the universe, and left it to stumble on by itself. Her weary mind dwelt with a great effort for an instant on the tangled threads of their disappointments. America wished to withdraw from her position in the East; from all the potentialities of her presence there. The Eastern problem was not, she held, her responsibility. Perhaps the corner of it she had lifted appalled her. Perhaps she had attempted a too ambitious job. No group of men — not even the dauntless ones who had grappled with the tremendous difficulties here — could make over the East in a few short experimental

years. At any rate, after successive agitations, the country, divided on the question of colonial possessions, seemed now to have come to the point of relinquishment; and the unclosed scaffoldings of the attempted structure of enlightened government in the East would be left to rot before the gaze of the Orient. Julie knew that that was what her countrymen hated — not the going, but the failure left behind, the judgment pronounced upon them in the courts of the world.

Julie was watching with every nerve for Barry. Once more to have the old fire thrown over her. But after all this fearful waiting, what would there be to say? Even if she poured forth the tale of her wholly wretched situation, there was nothing ever, ever, that he could do. If she had been before unfit for him, she was now utterly removed from him. Certainly he could not move through life with such a thing as it was fated she should become dragging around his neck. They had been too near to each other for her to inflict upon him a brutality like that. Fright at this picture of ruin for them both turned her faint. Perhaps after all, she had better not wait.

Chad passed, his face pale and abstracted. He nodded at the spot where Julie stood rooted. She gazed after him with a piteous absence of ill-will. His had been such a tiny contributory force to the avalanche. She forced herself to move on towards Isabel, who intolerably radiant and shining, wavered across her path. Isabel came down abruptly out of her glorified mood, and searched the girl's broken and disintegrated being with a passionately curious gaze.

Julie knew that Isabel was waiting for the signal of complete capitulation, and she struggled with all her force to withhold the surrendering sign. As she

looked on the triumph and terror of this woman, one of the dark lusts of this land that had surged all about her heretofore without touching her, suddenly took possession of her. She wanted to strike Isabel, to beat her out of existence. She had borne enough in this black land, and this woman was not only her enemy, but her destroyer—the very symbol of the country which had twisted and thwarted and wholly wrecked her life. She stumbled toward Isabel, whose purple eyes must have fathomed some mad intent, for she stepped warily back till the crowd interposed between them. Julie's impulse failed—a poor avenging instrument she. As she wheeled away, she saw Isabel's countenance assume an expression as if some godly satisfaction had been handed down to her.

Her desperate eyes still searching in every direction, Julie rambled unsteadily on. Everything looked strange, as if she had never belonged to the pageant of human passions. Oh! To be back again in the rich moving of human passions!

She came upon a group talking in hushed tones. The ejaculations of dismay sounded an odd note in this hard festal blare. Major Holborne was knitting his brows; Chad's face wore a queer arrested look; a woman uttered a soft cry.

"When did you hear it?" somebody asked.

"This evening, while people were on the Luneta. The police telephoned me to get her husband. He wouldn't go—so I went," Holborne said.

"What has happened?" Julie demanded.

Nobody replied at once, then Chad said heavily: "Leah Chamberlain threw herself out of a window of the Oriente—and dashed out her brains."

"Ah!" The girl was still for a moment. "But why?" she demanded.

The men said nothing. Mrs. Burke, a little English woman drew her aside. "It's never safe to ask why. Locroft was called home, he had come into the title; and — well, I suppose it was all impossible!"

Another impasse! Leah, the will-o'-the-wisp — who, every one had said, had never had a serious feeling in her gossamer existence — displaying at last a supreme, deadly seriousness. It was inevitable that one who had so completely held her life in her own hands should herself have destroyed that life. Leah would never consent to live or die except on her own terms.

Julie glanced up from where she stood frozenly considering Leah's fate, to behold Barry coming in her direction. His invincibly lifted head quickened her. Every human thing about him sent a thrill through her deadened senses — the desert face full of visions, the ardor of life that was in him. For an instant it seemed as though she were being brought back into sanity and safety again, as if through his presence a loop-hole of escape must open up.

But immediately following these sensations there rose before her brain a vision of a horrible street with bleached faces thrust up out of the bowels of the earth. Her fingers clutched the spot where the stolen medallion had hung, the token of his spirit that had intervened between her and a monstrous fate. The chain remained intact; she thrust it down in her dress so that he might not notice that the medallion was gone.

"Julie!" he exclaimed coming quickly towards her.

She replied with an articulate sound of joy and terror.

He took both her hands in the joy of meeting and drew her out of observation to the gallery.

"I've been sick for a sight of you — in a desert abandoned, choked with sand!" The tone of his voice brought the tears smarting to her eyes. "I used to have a thousand things in my life — a million — and now all I've been thinking about is you!"

The blood came back into her face and life into her heart.

"What do I care for the world without you in it? I wouldn't walk the sick old place without you." His voice broke. "You're still following some disastrous mirage! Ah, Julie — when our souls have the same dreams in them — and have beckoned each other across the world!"

He put his arms about her, and kissed her. She burst into agonized tears and clung to him. "There," he said, "isn't that the miracle!" he cried in radiant tenderness. "In this moment we've become endowed with a hundred lives! Henceforth we'll take the rough paths together. China, Julie, old China — the wonder of it. You and I and Sun Yat Sen, up and down the plains and highways, touching the gophers into fire!"

"The gophers!" she shuddered away. "Oh! How can you bear to stay in this brutal place? It hates so bitterly. It takes revenge so monstrously! It has eaten up our dreams, torn our hopes from us, and rolled our lives in the dust."

"But the wonder of it, Julie," he argued, with glowing eyes. "The mystery of it, and the unending struggle beating about you like wings of the

invisible! The battle of light and darkness — God's own dear battle. The human strain at its utmost, the heights and the depths! Why, I'd be in it forever. I'd not miss it for anything. I would keep on tramping in it with a sack at my back."

Julie's teeth bit at her white lips. "And the terror of it," she cried fiercely; "the cruelty, the evil of it; the plagues that are even now eating up the city of your hopes — Oh, the death that waits in all its paths!" She leaned back weakly against a post.

"It's a hard path truly," he conceded. "Many's the time I've starved in the East, and come close to its bottomless pools. It is only a short while since, that I thought I was on the high places for good, with the universe at my back; but I'm down on foot again in the dusty road, along with the rest of the world. But I never think of those times — for what cocoon remembers his worm's body? We are going on — to-morrow, or next day. You haven't seen China. We're refugees, but she'll find us our place. Nobody that has ever won a foot of the world turned back."

Her white face stared mutely at him for a moment.

"I'm not up to your — golden journeys, Barry," she said painfully, her lips quivering. "I'd have to be made all over again for that! You must go alone — or with some one that can help you. But — perhaps you won't forget me, even if I was such a futile thing. When the sun sinks on your deserts, call me up out of the mirage, and we'll plan together — as we used to, the overthrow of the old order of things."

"We'll follow the road together!" he insisted vigorously, "and sometime, a long while hence on the journey, I'll wake you one morning with the shout that the Millennium has come; and you will come out,

trailing yourself in morning-glories, to welcome the world at your gate!"

He drew back aghast at the look in her face.

Somebody back of them spoke Barry's name inquiringly, as if not sure, in the dim light, that it was he. They turned around, and Isabel came toward them, amazingly changed.

She had discarded her splendid raiment, and appeared in a short, diaphanous garment that flared about her like bloody flames. Her black hair swept like a wind-blown scarf to her firm white heels.

Julie slipped suddenly back into the shadows, while Barry stared at Isabel in strange silence.

"I'm going to dance!" she announced. "You have often asked to see me, so come. Ah; to-night I am mad for wings! I have something afterwards to tell you — something of great importance."

She plucked Barry by the sleeve and drew him on. Barry put out his hand to draw Julie along with him; but Isabel soon contrived in the crowd, to separate from him the indeterminedly following girl.

One end of the sala had been thrown into a softly radiant dusk. Under the streamers of one high lamp, Isabel stood and stretched out her arms like radii of light. Then in a whirl like a sun tumbling through the sky, she was in motion. Julie who had wandered up to the wide crowded circle of onlookers stood feverishly watching. Every movement of that mad, exultant whirl of limbs was an intolerable stab. Those feet twinkling like pearls out of the wind of motion looked as though they might kick down the stars. Julie herself had been one of the obstacles they had kicked out of their path. Yet she could not take her

eyes away from this dusky sorceress spinning in fire, this houri of terrible loves and hates.

An emotional stir vibrated through the crowd. Eyes exchanged messages. Julie looked around to find that a young Spaniard had pressed in next to her and was regarding her with all the ardor of his eyes. Through the wide open galleries the moonlit vision of an intoxicating night appeared, and subtle vows seemed to whisper all down the reaches of the tropical dusk. The young man's glance seemed to say, "Let us go — and follow the night!"

When the palpitating circle broke, Julie crept away in search of a small stair-case, which she remembered to have seen when she had stopped with Isabel. It was quite impossible for her to escape unseen by the main stair-case.

She came out upon a small gallery somewhere at the remote end of the house. There were others upon this gallery. Their figures, very near her, were clearly outlined in the silver tones of the moonlight.

Julie stared hard, then quickly dropped back into the shadow. She waited stiller than the night itself, for she knew she had stepped into a critical moment of a life so deeply allied to her own that her being palpitated to every developing turn of it.

Long before Barry could have done so, Julie divined what was to happen.

The two were standing looking beyond the garden, that seemed to sing in its creation, to the spires of the city frosted under the rising moon. Isabel was pointing to it: "How can you bear to give it up?"

Julie, watching, saw the spasm that contracted Barry's tired features.

"I don't see how, exactly, we can help ourselves!" he replied. "I am not a State, you see, I'm only an individual, very small after all."

"And thus ends the grand scheme to democratize the East."

"It looks that way."

"My poor friend," Isabel commiserated, "who tried to put a rope of sand around eternity! But no dreams are lost — some time inevitably they take form. Dreams are the souls of things that are about to happen. If only we could make these particular ambitions take real shape, you and I!

"Orcullu and I have worked hard, and we are about to win. Arturo, his brother in Washington, says it is sure. You can see that it will be so. It is a dizzy moment that is coming our way; we have found rapacious Eastern enemies not far off, where we expected to find friends. We must not be swallowed up, just as we become free. An American protectorate of some sort is at first imperative; we have the wisdom to comprehend that — and, at the helm, an American — with the power of that nation back of him — President of the first modern republic in Asia.

"You are to be the Captain of that coming republic — the greatest honor the East ever conferred upon a white man. We have decided it — Orcullu and I — when the hour strikes. Our neighbor Japan will not dare touch us then. You can go on, and do what you please. Ah, did you think I would desert you?" she cried.

"Did you not give this land the bottomless devotion of your heart? Well, then, the land will reward you, as it knows how to reward all those who truly serve."

Julie fell back abruptly. Though in a measure she

had dimly comprehended something like this, the tremendousness, the reality of it all overwhelmed her. Barry was to see fulfilled all that he had wanted in his soul.

And she was wiped out utterly — so consummately had Isabel contrived. There was something almost justifiable in the way Isabel — and Fate — had gauged her quality, her triviality, and had flung her aside. She had a blinding vision of herself as too weak and purposeless to survive in this cosmos, where one's metal was tested at every turn. Back there in the old world, she might have muddled along; but here one must quickly win, or irretrievably lose — step on or out. Ellis had dropped out, but she had tagged on in a struggle for which she had in nowise been fitted.

And now, though she hated Isabel impotently, hopelessly, she saw at last, as almost an inevitable thing, her own brutal removal from all paths whatsoever. Even if she had not already been damned, she could not have offered Barry, ever, anything so splendid as Isabel had achieved. She acknowledged herself completely beaten.

She must get away — as hurriedly as possible. Groping her way back, she found the small staircase she had started out to seek. In the garden there was not a soul, just the stillness of impersonal space closing cruelly around her. The whole tropical world quivered with a passion of human futility. Pain, panic, despair, swept her on in a current of darkness.

The old cinder of a gate-keeper held open the gate to let her out. Gate-keepers, she thought, were fatal people; they were always opening disastrous portals. As she passed out, she snatched up, with the instinct for something to cling to, a blood-red hybiscus flower.

She stood and looked about her in hopeless uncertainty of soul, debating which direction of the compass she should choose. A *carromata* came drowsing along the street. The horse came to a halt before the gate. The driver insinuated a somnolent head in her direction, but without any real expectation in his manner.

Julie stared hard at the thing. There was one thing about a *carromata*—it could keep on going. She climbed into the vehicle to the *cochero*, who wanted to know where he should take the Señorita; she replied, "Just drive!"

Familiar with the city's nocturnal habits, he nodded. If this woman wished to ride in the night with her own soul, it was her own concern. To see nothing, say nothing, and to keep on—that was the code of the Manila Jehu.

Horse and driver moved in slumber through the moonlight. The city passed by all silvered, like one of God's cities up in the skies. It was perfectly still, as if there were no mortals in it any more.

Pedro, the *cochero*, drove semi-consciously over the endless bridges, and streets—a great distance, clear to the moon, it seemed. He and Disgusto, his horse, in their perpetual slow movement had gone several times round the earth to be sure, but never had they gone so far in one journey in the dead of the night, when the spirits were out.

Once he had looked round to see what his fare was doing, and had discovered her looking very hard at something she held in the palm of her hand. The other hand, he had noticed, grasped the fading flower. She did not see him. She saw nothing at all. Her face wore a strange, fixed look. It was not within Pedro's powers to fathom the things that concentrated

look contained. They had gone on roaming. Once or twice into his inconsecutive dreaming a soft sound had broken, but his subconsciousness had virtuously reminded itself of the *cochero's* code, to mind one's own concerns.

At last he sprang up out of his seat with a cry. Something had fallen heavily against his sleeping back. Pedro was used to almost all the startling developments of a vagabond's career. He could have told strange tales of fares, but never before had one fallen dead in his vehicle. He knew at once what had happened. For a couple of hours, Disgusto had been carrying a dead fare over the city. Strange journey, indeed!

Pedro was deeply perturbed. He did not at all want the police to get after him, but he did urgently want to see what riches the lady had had upon her when she died. He directed Disgusto to a dark corner of the street, fastened up the rubber rain shield of the *carromata*, which concealed the body very well, and also his investigating activities.

The woman had a face like a cold star. There were moments when, his eye falling upon it, Pedro found it hard to prosecute his search. But she had rich raiment, and a gold ring with a fine stone in it on the finger of the hand from which hung downwards the red flower. Wasn't that like a woman, Pedro thought, to drop dead with a flower in her hand? God had stricken her right in this vehicle. Undoubtedly a very wicked woman, though beautiful! Too bad one couldn't sell a creature as lovely as this. Such splendid beings seldom rode in Pedro's cart. He passed his dark paws over the body to see if there were anything more precious to bring to light, and discovered the gold chain. This delighted him and whetted his appe-

tite for gain. He searched the *carromata* absorbedly, and unearthed out of the corner of the seat a small round box such as is used for medicine. It contained a number of small silver coins. His fare! He emptied it greedily out into his palm, counted the silver with devotion and slipped it into the pocket of his frayed cotton trousers. Then he smelled speculatively the inside of the box, turning it in every direction. His fare's indefiniteness as to direction came, with a trail of suspicions, back to his mind. In matters like this, Pedro, who had lived all his life in the dregs of existence, had quick intuitions. This white creature had thrown herself away; nobody at all wanted her; therefore she and all about her were legitimate loot.

He knew a place, providentially, not very far away, where he might strike a good bargain. He propped the body up in the seat and secured it there by means of ropes and a halter. It glistened in the moonlight like an archangel, and made him afraid. He made the ragged storm-curtain fast in front of it, and crossed himself. Never by any chance would anybody at all know that he had a beautiful lady back there, a dead lady who had killed herself in his *carromata*, and whom he was going to sell in the place without a name where they trafficked in all things under the sun, even the dead.

He stopped at a spot where some old walls joined. No opening could be perceived in the darkness, but Pedro knew this spot better than the world which passed the walls daily but never stopped to think what might lodge back of them. He uttered a low whistle that pierced with a peculiar cadence the stillness of the night. Soon a shadow and then another shadow shot out from some invisible aperture. Pedro gestured

to the *carromata*, flinging upon them an ejaculation. The shadows advanced stealthily to the cart, tore away the curtain with savage haste, flung it about the body, with which in an instant they had disappeared behind the darkness of the walls. Pedro, after having given Disgusto an admonitory kick, flew after them down the narrow crooked alley made by the turns of the broken walls. On the sandy beach not far from a crooked row of distorted dwellings the body had been deposited, and over it, the grease of their streaming candles falling upon it, knelt a brutal crew sweeping over it heavy, appraising paws.

Pedro snatched up in his hands a strand of the long, shimmering hair, and fingered it admiringly.

"She's through with the earth, this one — killed herself with poison; but she must have had a fine time in the world, in this beautiful body. There was another this evening, at the Hotel Oriente. Zip, boom! Disgusto and I saw her come tumbling out of the air, her brain splashing blood all over the pavement! Do white women sin so terribly? This hair, we'll sell to the fair ones of Sampolac to catch more game with. This one leave on the sand — and when the tide comes up —

"Where is my price? That ring is worth much, the chain also — and even the dress and shoes. I must have good money, hear you, to close the mouths of the police, if anybody searches this far."

The creatures, without pausing in their work of hacking off the hair in great streamers, made a muffled retort.

A bulk was projecting itself toward them from one of the hideous huts. It came writhing across the sand; the ghouls, in furious dispute now over the pos-

session of the ring, stepped on its groping, shuddering hands. Too weakened and blinded to move aside, it collapsed next to the body of the girl. One of the spasmodic hands caught and clutched in its hold the red flower that clung to her dress. Then with a long shiver, this creature subsided in the sand.

Pedro stared at it with eyes of horrified apprehension. "My money, quick!" he yelled.

The outlandish group derided him. "Get it from him!" they cried, pointing to the dead man.

Without one backward glance, Pedro fled.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DARK stretches of emptiness! The rush of chaos through endless space! Nothing anywhere that *knows*. . . . An equation without a sign. . . .

Off in dark Eternity, a gleam of light — dividing all space — where *minus* changes to *plus*, *is not* to *is*. Towards it struggles, battling with all its little strength, a mortal consciousness.

Up out of the void, voiceless utterances sweep, like the drone of far-off, undiscovered seas: “Minus 5 . . . 4 . . . 3 . . . Minus 3 . . . 2 . . . 1. . . . Decimal point! . . . 9 . . .”

Back around an infinite circle the Soul sweeps to strike again for being beyond the Point!

“Minus — Point . . . 5 . . . 4 . . . 3 . . .” intones the judgment from the deeps.

Over and over, the drifting consciousness hurls itself through the wilderness of the Lost — and over and over, the awful voices measure throughout infinity the losing fight. Swept to the pits of zero — Eternal Silence — the Soul, with its last desperate knowing force, sends through the terror of the wastes its agonized appeal: “God, life!”

That other planet had been one of light — light that streamed over the world, and into the faces of its beings. Here, in this . . . *sphere*, black animate shadows — possibly . . . very doubtfully, human — crawled in and out of the holes of the universe.

Again, in that unfathomable fashion, two worlds

convulsively changed places — and there was no clear mark between the real and the unreal.

Pushing at the mists did no good! One moment you were *zero*; the next, you were *minus*. . . . The horror of it was too much to bear!

At last the pall of those dark, terrible outer places lifted. The girl came fearfully back into consciousness, her being shaken to its foundations by the terror of the thing it had passed through. It had touched awful and unknown areas.

Memories broke through indistinctly, fragmentarily. She had suffered — been fearfully ill: Something had been agonizedly sensible of that. How many beings were there in her to be aware? She had known things before her complete awakening — but had not known herself.

It was not an unpopulated world into which she had dropped: she knew now, somehow, that dim, fearful people were in it — she had heard and felt them . . . their passing through the air . . . and even the silences that fell dreadfully down upon them.

Over and over her dim, sickened wits repudiated her mind's claim to this self . . . denied that anything that was *she* could find lodgment in this ragged figurement. The personality offered for her acceptance was distorted out of the slightest semblance of credibility. Some time her real self would come back to her — all gathered together, and decently clad.

Thirst obsessed her every faculty!

She dragged herself up, and found that, though so weak she could not hold one idea long, she was not too ill to move. She felt that if she could get her mind wholly to come back and to grip hard, her limbs would not shake so.

She stared around her in astonishment, her mind fluctuating uncertainly before what she looked out upon. Another chimera! A toppling crazy world, patched together. She gave a mad little scream. How could one live in a world in which there were so many holes? One would be always falling out of them. What incredible kind of senses must one have to exist in those moon-struck huts?

She fled unsteadily out of the hovel where she had found herself. Before what confronted her, her mouth opened again to cry out, but closed gulpingly without a sound. That crooked coast, that retching mouth of a bay, those blood-red nets!

She pressed her hand across her head, as if to hold the recollections that came flitting disjointedly through it, trying fearfully but futilely to make coherent connections. A vision came suddenly shocking before her — revolving, ribald human groups, clawing and jeering about her, only to take flight.

It was indeed in an outrageous form and surroundings that she had found life. *They* had looted her dress, her shoes, stockings — her hair, which her groping fingers had been so long trying to find. Some one, in saturnine mercy, had flung a filthy rag over her, which automatically she clutched about her. Having picked her clean, it was inconceivable why they had let her live!

Too stupefied to be afraid, she moved about in the nightmare. Strange sounds came from the huts. She stopped and listened, and commenced to tremble in fresh terror. She stumbled quickly away across the sand.

Suddenly her foot struck a bundle of rags. She stopped and gazed down. Something ghastly lay there

in the sand: a child struggling hideously with its last pinch of strength — so futile an atom against the forces of the universe! As she stooped closer and stared, horror swept over her in a chill of ice. She knew now why there was no roar of moving here, no devil's laughter; the place had been stricken with the plague — the creatures were dying like rats in their trash-made huts.

She wanted to run, but in her terror could not command her muscles to move. The child's head, crusted with sores, lay convulsed upon the sand. She regarded it in horror, repugnance, and pity. Before her shaking vision rose a Pavilion — an Eastern market-place, and from it a leper stretched forth a supplicating hand.

Pestilence-stricken hordes, unstaunched running sores! Day by day she had passed the Pavilion, had shuddered at the leper's bleached face turned, empty of hope, to the pitiless sun, and had run away. In what dream had she seen those tortured masks? — faces, praying for death —

Always before she had fled — there had come a moment of violent contention with herself, when it had become inevitable that she could not always go round, that sometime she must go *through*, clear through. She had always run away — failed completely: the cycle of those past failures seemed now to burn like one of their sores within her. And now she was facing again this crisis — her soul finally would no longer let her off. She closed her eyes and put forth trembling fingers. The clutch of the leper closed chilly around them. The circuit at last was complete.

The moment her eyes opened, she uttered a piercing

cry. Locked in her grasp lay the hand of the plague-stricken child. The rigid fingers clutched around hers in a last hold upon slipping life. Spasm after spasm of agony tore the puny frame. A great throb of answering human pain shot through the girl's heart. She sank down in the sand, deliriously clinging to this scrap of life as if it were the last in the world. The child shivered into stillness. Julie stared resentfully, indignantly about her into hot space. Hopeless — hopeless! everywhere! She began to cry weakly, dropping her head in the sand.

Her thirst was overwhelming. She gathered herself up, and crept cautiously among the huts. It was early afternoon, and the denizens of the place were either absent, ill or dying. A few men were fishing out on the bay. Nobody in this hole of death cared anything about her. She moved on, peering stealthily through the apertures of the huts. What she saw staggered her, but she went doggedly on till she came upon some blackened water vessels. She knelt down to drink — the water was afloat with skating insects — joyous, horrible things, dancing on the water of dying men!

She picked up one of the vessels, and went searching till in one empty hut she found some matches and a pot of rice. With her spoils she wandered down the sandy coast to the shelter of a great rock, where, after much diffused effort, she contrived to make a fire of driftwood.

Drowsing upon the sand, she waited for her meal to cook. The thought of leaving this ill-omened spot had already occurred to her, but vaguely and accompanied by the presentiment of obstacles facing her. First, she had no clothes; one could not walk out into the

city in an underskirt with a rag over one's head. Then, she could not reason out where she was to go or what she was to do, if she did go out. Last, hidden in the back of her brain, and not yet presenting itself fully to light, was an insuperable obstacle. Some unknown fettering chain was binding her — she knew that she could not go.

She drank thirstily of the hot boiled water, consumed a part of the rice, and dropped asleep on the sand under the rock.

Again came the torture of the same dream, the hard wrenching out of drift land; it was morning when she awoke — dim morning, before the sun. The first thing her eye lighted on was the vessel of rice. She reached out and ate heartily of it. Then she rose, and walked through the gray shadows of her monstrous world.

Confronting her lay that sordid bit of doomed coast, those crazy huddled huts shaken by the winds of devastation and hiding the terror of death. Across her path a human body lay stark, like a dead fish on the sand. The creature had died there in the night, and no one had come to bury it. She was seized with the frantic impulse to get out of this malevolent place as quickly as possible. She walked past the huts, and heard again the moaning sounds. She stopped in despair. Why had these people been abandoned to their destruction? Where was the Board of Health? Nobody had come to help — nobody was coming.

She leaned back against the wall, beyond which she had meant to escape. She understood now how far beyond control the plague had swept. She gazed back at the thing on the sand, at the livid face, and

empty mask that fixed with its hopeless stare. Everywhere *somebody* was staying to see it out.

Suddenly the complete chain of her life's circumstances came sweeping back into her consciousness. She remembered why she was here — the stupendous, ineffectual effort she had made to wrench herself free. And here she was back once more in the old insoluble conditions, with nothing changed — up against the same uncombatable odds, dumped here on this spot by a leveling, inconjectural fate, lost among the lost! Her constant use of that odious drug had insured her against the full fatality of the morphine dose. She should have remembered that she would need far more than any one else.

It did not occur to her to try again. The horror of that Outside Struggle still darkened her mind. There was no chance in the world she would not take rather than risk again those unnameable terrors. It had been made absolute that she must go on — even though there was no hope: to struggle and still struggle, to the end. She stood there against the wall, and tried to face once more the relinquished battle.

The moment when resolution came engulfed the world.

Before it these creatures and their tragedy grew dim and the Plague was wiped out. She shook away the tears that had fallen on her face, and walked back to the huts.

A glance through the holes that answered for windows sufficed to reveal the extremity her life had touched. But before the decision at the wall, she had already embraced the plague; before reason had found the courage, an inner self had already stretched forth

her hand. And thus began the sojourn in the Pavilion — among dying men.

In sheer surrender beyond belief the creatures gave up to die. The girl did what she could: boiled water, cooked food, cared for the sick, attempted to clean up the wretched community. The bodies were buried along the shore, till Julie managed to get a frenzied appeal through to the Board of Health.

Finally, native servants of the Board came and took charge of the bodies, assisted half-heartedly in cleaning out the dirt, left medicines and food, and promised a doctor — who never appeared. They stood themselves in deadly fear of the cholera, and knew that in the general panic they would scarcely be held to account for this wretched spot. They told Julie that the cholera suddenly, like smoldering fire fanned to flames, had broken out from end to end of the city. Always in cycles of time the Plague had come to sweep them to destruction but never before as now. Terrible was the will of God over his little men. The Americans were taking it too, they said. There were not doctors enough to cope with the pest; certainly — when honest men were stricken — none were to spare for this rogues' nest. The Americana who was so singularly situated — ought, they thought, to be looking out for herself. It did not matter what happened to this spawn of Beelzebub, to whom not even Mary in Heaven would stoop.

Julie's mind burned with the fierce rage of defeat — a pygmy battling along the sands of creation, she seemed to herself. At times the cold horror of it seemed about to crush her; a big, hideous game where, in ceaseless opposition, she moved, and the Plague moved, and the Plague took the pieces — a low, one-

sided contest in which the pieces had never a chance. They were trash, floatage on the current of life, but they were human. They — who were in the possession of the miracle of *thought* — to be swept away like straws by this filthy, insentient thing! At times, she too dropped into their mood of apathy and capitulation, but roused always to fight. She pressed into the struggle her every faculty, conjured from passionate depths forces that had never before seen light. Away back in Nahal, she had cast her soul into the beginnings of this struggle, and it seemed as if the old fervor had come to life and was being put to its crucial test.

Along with the Plague, she fought the Hunger. The fire of the old desire burned often in wild spurts. Sometimes she would pace the sand, crying and clenching her hands, hour after hour. When the delirium of the Hunger was at its worst, she would run madly out into the surf and let the water break over her. There was nothing to lean on, nothing to help!

Then the Plague, with its monstrous fatality, would sweep over her senses, and submerge her personal struggle. With so much misery always before her eyes, she began to lose track of herself. The Plague swallowed up everything; it came finally to stand as the real antagonist of her existence, for it sought to rout the supreme stand her spirit had taken. Deep in her consciousness she cherished a dream of eventual conquest, of a time when inconceivably she should win. Just to beat it back once! For so long it had snatched everything from under her struggling hands. Of this she thought incessantly as she made her rounds doggedly, combating each hopeless moment.

But her creatures continued to die as under a doom

of God. Julie felt as if she had come up against the wall of the universe, where against its insensible strength her human will was being shattered.

Her charges, terribly broken, had accepted her as a partner of their dark fate. They dug into their miserable stores, and those of them who had still escaped the Plague went forth on errands of industry or depredation, and returned to pour their spoils into the common fund. What marvel of loyalty always brought them back to the accursed spot, Julie could not fathom.

At night she would steal out in the street, to claim her own soul back for a moment. The streets were the universe. Even the grotesqueries had a way of stumbling out toward the open, as if at the last their wretched beings sought egress to freer spaces. She would stand knitting her brows at the darkness, as if trying to claim some solution out of it. Some time she meant to go away—but where? The silent, empty streets troubled her. Up and down them the gay light of the sun had poured upon brightly passing people; the perfume of baskets of flowers being borne to market before the dew was off the day; the cheery grind of ox-carts milling the golden dust of earth; the lilt of the water-carrier's song; the rhythmic beat of the washer-women's bats upon the stones; the flash of paddles, and the swish of glad little boats making down the river to the sea—all this had been part of the immortal stir of life that had made this place for them a paradise of the sun.

Terrible days these were! Sometimes peering out in the daylight, she caught glimpses of the dejected funeral processions, the bearers and mourners bowed down, as if the fate of man were too heavy to be borne.

The inconsequence of these lives made them more than ever tragic: they were so humble; they never rebelled. Julie thought that if God had been responsible for such things as these, man would have rebelled against Him ages ago; but it was because man saw his own ancestral mistakes made manifest that he bowed his head without protest to their consequences.

There had been heavy toll taken in the Tondo district. In old newspapers that drifted into her retreat, Julie had read familiar names; and, as the black hearses had dragged wearily by, she knew that they carried many of her old pupils. As she watched them pass, a vision would rise before her of big boys in cheap drill suits and barefooted maidens pondering at the blackboards — poor blundering things, eternally wistful over the courtesies and the wisdoms of the West; Julie wept.

Then she would remember that Chad had called her the little lady goddess of the East. Standing in her ragged *camisa*, gazing from her walls across the streets, a desire would sweep over her to go and reveal to Chad the heart of the East that she had found far from his haunts.

Where was Barry? The query arose a thousand times in her mind. One of the papers had reported that he had left the city. Isabel, too, she gleaned, had taken herself away. Julie recalled the visit Isabel had made to some secret Island, and the paradise she had conjured up.

Her own disappearance, Julie saw, had apparently not caused a ripple of concern. In this hour of stress, her absence from her own world was not noted. Who, after all, was there to remark it? From the Department, from the Señor, from Barry even, she had cut

herself adrift. She had gone away from the Reredos without explanation: but not even had they troubled themselves to discover what had become of her.

When the pain of her isolation struck too deep, she would steal back behind the broken walls to the oblivion that inevitably lay there. Here where the worms were being trodden out, one was forced to forget one's own despair. Gradually she forgot everything but the desire to find somewhere a power to conquer the Plague. In its struggle, the girl's soul seemed to be reaching out toward something which, though she could in no-wise define it, began to appear accessible.

One night, with the old sense of futility and wretched helplessness, she was standing over the body of one of the poor creatures who was taking too long to die. Through the tremendous stretches of space above her great bolts of lightning intermittently flashed. Power! Everywhere, great and invincible power. She wondered passionately what a man must think or feel in his soul to touch the source of it.

The man's body before her commenced to take on its final repose. His eyes lay open to the sky. Julie, bending over him stared in sudden awe; for from under the dirt and grime of that abandoned thug, a mystery was emerging. Suddenly the Veil pulled apart; down there in the dust — the Common Soul! The Soul that was through all things. She and the worm and God — in one unbreakable bond!

CHAPTER XXV

SUPPLIES were becoming very hard to procure. Indeed, Julie had for some time felt urged to go and seek assistance from the outside world. Not the Plague alone, but starvation threatened what was left of these people for whom she had been struggling. The time had come when she must somehow face the outside world.

But how without rational clothing could she undertake such an errand? It was forced upon her that she must first of all present herself to the Reredos, and get her clothes. She remembered now, too, that she had left a little money in the pocket of a dress, — not much, but it loomed tremendously to her eyes. It was probably safe, since she had hidden the key to her trunk among the *cadena de amor* trailing the window-sill, where no *muchacho* would have dreamed of searching.

Looking herself desperately over, in the darkness, with full appreciation of her fantastic appearance, Julie found it an almost insuperable business to thrust herself beyond the walls. Quite impossible, on the other hand, was it to remain here longer. Gathering her courage, and consoling herself with the thought that nobody in the city longer remembered her, or was concerned about her, she set forth, her head covered by an old scarf against the terrors of the journey.

She was not really too tall to pass for a native woman, nor, in this light, too white to be taken for a *mes-tiza*, — and Eurasians in native costume were not uncommon; but there was in her movement a rhythm

that would have revealed her at once as an outsider to the curious observer. Fortunately, few such were abroad; and by selecting a round-about way through unfrequented streets, she contrived to pass unmarked through the dusk, though every nerve was a-quiver when at last she crossed the bridge near the isolated estate of the Reredos.

Approaching the huge iron gates, she saw that in no part of the house within her vision was a light to be seen. She knew that there was in the rear wall a breach, which the children had enlarged, by much chipping and hacking, to enable Chiquito's increasing dimensions to pass through. This aperture would serve her particularly well just now, since she could not bring herself to appear in this fashion at the front door.

She waded through the lush growth along the old stone walls, wormed herself through Chiquito's egress, and hurried across the grounds toward the house.

The garden had commenced to take on the covertly wild look of a thing that no longer acknowledges a master. All its lovely blooms had, with the waywardness of tropical foliage, betaken themselves to the tops of walls or trees. The snowy cadena shone timidly in silvery filagree high against Julie's old window.

The shell shutters were all closed fast; not a sound came from behind them. The house was totally dark. Gaining courage, the girl tried the door, knocked, and finally boldly shook the heavy framework.

Across the door sill and over the floor of the trellised porch, sun-faded newspapers were broadly scattered. The Señor had taken his family off to Spain, as he had said he would do. He had doubtless gone hurriedly at the coming of the Plague to his district, with-

out stopping to give instructions concerning these Manila periodicals, which the native carrier, with an increasingly divergent aim, had continued to throw over the gate.

Julie stooped and rummaged among the papers on the sill. Stuck fast under the door, she discovered a couple of letters. She pried them forth, and, examining them in the moonlight at the edge of the porch, found they were both addressed to her. She moved toward the seat under the fire-tree, which she and Barry had so often occupied; the full moon was now flooding the garden; she could read her letters there. In a vague appetite for news of the world she caught up, as she went, two or three of the papers from the walk.

Through curiosity she opened the unknown letter before her uncle's. She wondered why little Mrs. Smith had taken it into her head to write, after all this time.

The Smiths were now stationed in Solano, and Mrs. Smith rather pathetically wished to know if any of the things that had happened to Julie's old friends of Nahal were happening to Julie. She hoped not — for the worst thing that could happen to anybody had happened to her. She knew that the natives over here suffered from terrible things, but she had never dreamed that anything so awful could befall her. Those first cruel red spots on her white skin — looking as if they had been branded on with a red hot iron; Marlborough's desperate efforts to disprove them; the doctor's reticence; the nurse's gingerly cautious attitude, had all only disclosed the unbearable truth. She had caught the small pox in Nahal — though she was in Solano when it developed. Where else than in that

ill-omened island could one have got such a thing! She could demonstrate to everybody how fatal a spot to everybody Nahal had been.

She had not been anywhere near death, but rather than this thing she would have prayed for any other conceivable, cruel curse of the East — this East which had so many to give.

Marlborough had been a miracle of devotion, assuring her a thousand times that it would never matter to him what she looked like. A girl might believe all this — but to a woman whose heart was deeply versed in the frailty of men it was all intolerable. It wasn't that she was marked so badly — not really so much at all — but that she would never again see in the glass her old self. Marlborough was going to take her to Paris and have her skin peeled, but — she dared not believe.

Yes, certainly, there must have been a curse on that place! To further prove it there was Calmiden. After Julie left, Calmiden had been ordered to Dao to take Adams's place. "But, you know, Julie, he was never Adams's metal, and I guess he rebelled utterly at being put in Adams's shoes. Templeton goaded Calmiden to what he did — one day he struck him. I can't imagine any one's striking Calmiden and going on living, can you? Well — Templeton didn't, Julie, and that's it! It's so hard to tell, but in the big fight they had — men lose their balance so completely in places like this — Templeton somehow dropped dead. Of course you understand that he was a rotten old shell of a dipsomaniac that would cave in at the first few blows.

"They brought Calmiden over here for trial, and high-ranking officers came down from Manila. I

don't know what took place, but they say his men stood around him in an invincible and impenetrable wall of evidence, and he was acquitted. But he will never be the same Kenneth again.

"Do you know, I think that somehow this place has recoiled on us, Julie. We hated it and stood aloof from it. We despised the people and made gods of ourselves. You remember I used always to call them niggers—I thought I was showing the superiority of my birthright that way; and not one throb of this life here ever touched Calmiden's soul. Did any of us have any soul, particularly, in it? Weren't we the dead wood on a mighty, struggling stream? I don't know about you—what has happened to you; but I used to think there was something different about you, for all your seeming to take no real interest in anything here, save Calmiden—and Adams, a little.

"The regiment is soon to sail for home. Be sure to look us up, as we come through."

Julie dropped the letter in her lap. She leaned forward on her knee, and her mind went wandering over the stretches of the past. So this was the message of Nahal—all there was ever to be; of that Nahal which had caused her soul's difficulties. She pondered deeply the whole immense problem. Had it been her individual problem, set for her to solve—her fragment of eternal purposes to prove? How utterly she had blundered and drifted along, evading the particular, crucial nonconforming bit of the universe that she had perhaps come into life to subdue. Even when aware of her flaming objective, she had dallied weakly and wastefully in easy and uninspired areas of life. Stupidly she had let her fire die out, and her being go to waste.

Once she had been offered the choice of her ideals or Calmiden, and she had chosen Calmiden, though he was the antagonist of all her stirring beliefs. For a passing whim of passion, she had flung her sublimest convictions to the winds. That there were punishments for such perfidies of spirit she had come tragically to comprehend. She had halted and turned, given up — letting the things she had made a Covenant with go back to fate unaccounted for.

None of these men she had known *here* would have turned back, at any cost; as agents of the future, of the whole onmoving universe, nothing had counted with them — not happiness, nor life, nor love; while *she* had demanded insistently and supremely her human happiness, and, failing to obtain it, had let go, like the rest of the derelicts of life: and there the East had stepped in to capture her, as inevitably it captured all of her mood.

With here and there little flashes of eternal verities overwhelming her, she sat and thought more profoundly than ever she had thought in her life. She wanted to probe to the bottom and release the last vestige of the illusion of the past. Those few words of Mrs. Smith stood out like flame against her brain: "This place has recoiled on us — because we hated it, and stood aloof." Julie felt this sink into some deep, almost inaccessible place, and come forth again.

That was the key to the long mystery. That was the key to *her*. She remembered how contemptuous her friends in Nahal had all been of the work in hand, how anxious they had been to be rid of it — except her. She covered her face with her hands: *all but her!* She had clung to Nahal as a glory for herself — as a universe for a small and exhilarantly inflated ego to

expand in. Her sincere energies had borne fruit, but too often she had brushed aside all that had not colored her adventurous fancy. Turned in upon herself, she had skimmed fruitlessly this brown well of being. A psychological Alexander taking by assault the soul of Asia. In what a halo of Eastern colors she had planned to do that! She had chosen the East as a stage for her personal grandeur. She had expected a superlative destiny somehow to be handed out from it.

But from the East's dark face and blunted mind she had actually always shrunk; and as that foolish little woman, in a moment of tremendous wisdom, had pointed out, the East had recoiled upon her and pulled her down with ruthless irony to its lowest levels. Mrs. Smith might as well have said the universe, which demands atom for atom of energy, ounce for ounce of force.

Then had come the inscrutable forces, which had taken up her life and threshed it mercilessly to the point of death, and winnowed it out. The Great Law had taken her in hand, broken her old self to bits, and of the pieces transmuted a form to its ends. In order to come truly into life, she had first to be destroyed! She felt a thrill of the old exhilaration to have at last found the way.

She opened her uncle's letter, the moon falling in soft sheets about her.

It was upon that letter that for a moment the new fate seemed to hinge. He had written to say that his affairs were in better shape; that he had, in fact, sold the factories, advantageously; that some money of Julie's, which he had long ago invested for her, would now be available for her. He urged her to

come home; he was perfectly sure that the East was no place for a girl alone. She need not live with Mrs. Dreschell, if she did not choose to, but with more congenial relatives.

The girl sank once more into thought. She sat a long time staring at the moon-lit night, at the fire-flowers dropping through it like soft sparks. Over her came at last the conviction that she would never leave—that the gates of the East had indeed closed after her for good. There would be no more turning. She was going straight on, only struggle, everlasting struggle lying ahead. Things were moving toward something over here, and rather than all the safe paths of the world she would choose this vivid, perilous existence. That was what the levels had done for her—taken out all fear. She remembered Barry's high peak, where from him also fear had dropped. Here the Hunger had been vanquished. Back in that forlorn spot, she had fought the Plague, and lost; but the Plague had fought the Hunger, and won. There were big forces over here, to fight with or against. Everything for her must be created new. In the silence of the night, she recalled a vision of waiting and watching that she had seen in this same garden. Yes, she would go farther on.

She reached down for the papers, which had slipped to her feet. She wanted to see if that stroke of fate—Independence, had come. The most recent of the papers was two days old, and conveyed the information that the bill had failed to pass the Congress of the United States.

There would be no Philippine Republic! The significance of this stupendous fact did not penetrate her

all at once. Oddly scattered, different thoughts filtered through her mind.

Fate had decided aright. It would take these people awhile longer to make ready to meet the future. And if Isabel were right in her prophecies of the coming clash of the world, they would certainly be best as they were — till the earth were made safe for such little peoples as they.

Isabel's dreams then were fallen — and Barry's hopes were realized. Slowly the full realization of the turn of events broke upon her consciousness. The aims and hopes of Barry and Isabel could never have been united — never in any case. She saw that now.

Where then was Barry? The question flashed through every atom of her.

Her eyes, which unconsciously had wandered down the columns of the paper at which she was staring, rested on Barry's name — and the monstrous, incredible thing printed with it!

A process of deadly ossification, starting with her feet and traveling to her brain, seemed to be rooting her to this spot forever.

"He couldn't have it!" she murmured in stupid agony to the night.

The last blow out of the East! The uncombatable enemy! She flung out her arms despairingly, and crumpled crushed on the seat.

Silent as was the garden, it had a myriad of conveyances. They urged her to her feet, and on. She ran to the wall, thrust herself through the crevice, and continued to run along the dusky street till she came upon a *carromata*.

Now the *carromata*, by all the chances of the East,

was driven by the Pedro who had looted her body and who believed it at this moment to be buried in the sea. Therefore when he saw Julie, from whose hacked blond hair the wrap had slipped, Pedro, who had become too familiar with her features to forget them, gave a cry, and tried frantically to pass on. But Julie had Disgusto by the bit, and could not be dislodged.

"Drive me to Calle Arzobispo at once!" she commanded.

Pedro whimpering and shivering, sure now that the ghost of the unfortunate Señorita had come back to haunt his *carromata* forever, gave up resistance; and, when Julie had taken her seat, obeyed her frenzied injunctions with a rattle of terror in his throat. He drove at terrific speed, till Disgusto appeared ready to drop.

It would be this way, always, Pedro knew. This ghost whom he had plundered in life would not only take complete possession of his *carromata*, but would drive to death all the horses he could buy. So, when upon nearing the vicinity of the cathedral, the ghost commanded him to stop, leaped over the wheel, and shot forward without paying the fare, Pedro, instead of summoning a policeman, hurled terrific blows upon Disgusto and fled for all he was worth.

In the sacerdotal section of Arzobispo, with the monastic walls rearing darkly around her and the shadowy trees looming above her like super-human shapes, Julie paused. There was his house, lifting out of the dark foliage. She went forward unsteadily. At every step the world seemed to crumble under her tread, and death to claim all that was left of her universe.

A native policeman emerged from the shadows as she crept up to the gate. He surveyed her wonderingly.

"I must go in there!" she said.

"Women, women!" he exclaimed fussily. "The master of that house will never think of women any more. There was another one here this evening, crying as if this old earth were a cage and she were shut in it. She was a beautiful lady, too, with great blue eyes; but not a soul in that house, I tell you, stirred out to her. So at last she went groping away in the blackness. You had better go too. I am guarding the gate so that he shall die in peace. Besides," he added, "there is no one to let you in. The servants ran away, being afraid of the Plague—all but one boy. A young boy, a good boy; he is a Visayan, as so am I. They will stand by when Tagalogs take to their heels."

A vivid intuition flashed through the girl's soul. Stepping past the wordy policeman, she pressed her face close against the bars of the gate. "Delphine!" she called, again and again through the night.

A window slid open above. She could distinguish a slight figure standing in the aperture.

Tremulously she called again: "Delphine! It is I—your *maestra*."

The boy's wondering treble answered her: "*Maestra!*"

Tears of triumph rolled down her face.

"Come quickly, and open the gate!"

He was coming. She listened for every fall of his hurrying slippers.

At last a white *camisa* came fluttering through the darkness, the brave white *camisa* of the poor little

brown knight who had set out so long ago for the grand adventure.

"*Maestra*, my *Maestra*!" he exclaimed softly and incredulously, staring at her through the bars of the gate.

"Ah! You stayed with him!" was all she could say, the tears choking her.

The boy opened the gate, and let Julie up into the ominous stillness of the house. At the top of the staircase, he uttered a soft word, and Doctor Braithwaite appeared, a tall gray wraith spent with much struggle.

"My *maestra* has come back." Delphine quivered with simple pride.

The Doctor stared hard for several moments, while Julie made an agitated effort to explain. At last he contrived to recover himself.

"Chad was right, then," he said. "He believed that Isabel had tried to do away with you. After you had gone, she endeavored to make it appear that you had gone to meet a man in the southern islands. If I hadn't been over here so long — I think I might find you surprising.

"Barry was taken ill in the provinces," he went on. "Your boy brought him back, and has stuck to him to the end. If you have never done anything else here —"

He stopped short, his face contracted painfully. "I'm sorry it's too late!"

She was pitiful enough anyway, this thin, spent little creature, in her outlandish garments, and he winced at the effect of the blow he had delivered.

"I must see him," she said, in a low voice.

He shook his head. "But that's impossible — with the Plague."

She gave a sobbing little laugh. "The Plague! Why that's where I've been — with it all the time. I —" her head dropped — "watched them die."

His gray lips twitched. "Yes, we watch them die. Every doctor and every nurse on double duty. Chad and I took care of Barry. Then Rosalie took it, and Chad had to go to her. She's gone already." He paused.

"Barry's case has been different. Usually they go out like lightning — but he wouldn't die! And he wouldn't go to San Lazarus. He kept saying he was going to get over it quick. Said he had to be alive in these times. I never saw a man fight so hard; he has fought with the last artery and capillary. Doctor though I am, I really believed that he would win over sheer matter. And I wanted to see him triumph — it would have seemed like a victory for the race.

"*He* believed you would come back." The Doctor looked at her hard for several moments of deep silence, then he said: "The East has made you strong."

He sank heavily into a chair. "If you wish, you may watch. It is good that you have come. I believe I could not have kept my eyes open to-night — even for him! No sleep for nights — and nights!" he murmured.

"He's unconscious now — nothing more to do. Watch a while — and call me —" Even as he spoke, the Doctor sank sleeping in his chair.

She turned down the hall, groping ahead of her as through gulfs of darkness, her last plank shaking beneath her, scorching agony tearing at her heart.

His door stood open. There was a very dim light in the room. From the threshold, she could see the rumpled head, the quenched conquered face. She

stumbled to the bed; and, dropping down beside it, flung her arms about him, as if to hold off with main desperate human strength that last blow.

"You said you'd come back — wherever you were — if I called you!" she cried in anguished despair.

She lifted her head, and looked about her in wild entreaty. Where was He — in nights like these — who had walked human paths of despair? Somewhere here He must still be fighting the battle of death!

She crouched down on the floor; the spectacle of that inert form was insupportable. Suddenly she lifted her head. From out the soft wonder of darkness, with its swinging worlds, Barry was coming toward her — all alight, as of old — looking as he always looked when he had something perfectly new to do. Then he passed on, and darkness dropped once more.

With all the appeal in her, she flung her spirit out upon the night. Power, power — everywhere out there — tremendous, terrifying power behind the illimitable stretches of space, behind the swinging worlds, veining the universe like lightning to eternal depths. If only she could force a foothold in its great conspiracy! She had traveled far, gone deep to find it, and had more than once felt it graze her being. Just around the corner, close it was — yet out of touch. All that was in her soul, or would ever be, stretched after it in this moment. She tore at her circumscribed human vision as at some fatally binding bandage across her eyes. Just to see clear once!

Her consciousness in its search swept out of its surroundings, beyond the barriers of flesh. The stillness of the night seemed charged with the light and force of swift traveling stars. Struggling with the legions

of darkness and death, she stumbled suddenly into the kingdoms of the unseen.

The Doctor bent, in the gray light, over the bed. Nobody had called him; and, exhausted, he had slept throughout the night. He had come hurriedly, and stooped down to investigate the outstretched form.

He picked up one of the hands, and counted the pulse intently. A change passed over his face. He placed his ear to the heart. Then he slowly straightened up, and stood staring before him, in a trance of thought.

The dawn came peeping into the room. He bent over, and studied once more, without drawing breath, his patient's appearance in its reflection. A stir near at hand caused him to turn sharply. He had forgotten the girl.

He concentrated upon her a puzzled look.

"I think," he said, speaking slowly, as if groping through dazed layers of thought, "that you had better get up. He has pulled back!"

She started, then slowly raised herself from the floor. For a moment, she appeared to be stretching herself out of sleep; then he had an utterly odd sensation that she was putting out her hands in the red dawn toward some invisible thing.

THE END

